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With the Heralds of the Cross

Thoughts on the Foreign Mission Work

BY

Norbert Weber, O. S. B.

Abbot and Superior General

Translated by

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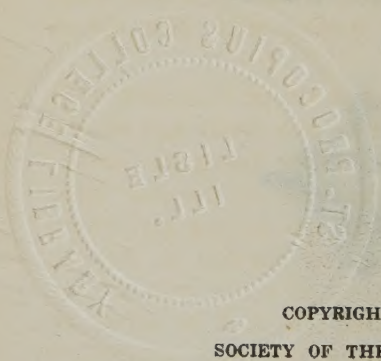
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Foreword

OYOUS peals of bells have ushered in the Feast of the Epiphany. The children stand before the Crib, beaming with happiness, and lost in admiration at its altered fittings. Clad in richly colored garments and resplendent with gold and jewels, the Three Kings kneel before the Divine Child. Their attendants—strange figures with black and brown features and foreign dress—gaze in wonder at the scene, while others of the retinue in long trains ascend the heights which tower above the Crib. The Savior of the World receives the ambassadors of the pagan world, and will anon dismiss them to their homes with His divine blessing.

Such were the thoughts which I carried with me when I left St. Ottilien two years ago on the Feast of the Epiphany. These thoughts accompanied me, as dear companions, to the Far East and dwelt steadfastly with me during my lonely wanderings from mission to mission in Africa. After a missionary journey of more than a year and a half, they conducted me back in safety to my native land. Meanwhile the home movement in support of the missions had made glorious progress. Then these thoughts, which had been the silent companions of my travels, began to

agitate within me, demanding their release. They wished to investigate the missionary spirit at home, and, if possible, fan still brighter the holy flame.

These thoughts I now send out into the world, with a prayer that they may find a welcome in the hearts of men of good will. May the Star of the Wise Men accompany them on their way! Right gladly shall I welcome them back if they have helped to lead even one pagan soul to the light of Truth.

It remains for me to acknowledge the use I have made of Dallet's "*Histoire de l'église de Corée* (Paris, Victor Palmé, 1874) in connection with the history of the Korean Missions.

Mission Abbey of St. Ottilien

THE AUTHOR

Feast of the Epiphany, 1913

Declaration

In accordance with the Decree of Pope Urban VIII, we hereby declare that, in so far as no official judgment has been handed down by the Church in each instance, the terms "martyr," "saint," and "blessed" have been used in this work only in the broad sense, and without any desire to anticipate the decision of the Church.

†NORBERTUS, O.S.B., *Abbot*.

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Advent Bells

I. WITHOUT GOD

THE solemn tones of the religious chant and the mighty notes of the organ resound through the silence of the dark fir-woods which seem still more lonesome in their wintry clothing, heavily bordered with an icy fleece. In this peaceful seclusion stands a monastery, which is about to send its monks forth as missionaries to pagan lands.

A dim and frosty silence fills the air. A wintry mist, raised by the timid rays of the midday sun, envelops the tower of the monastery. The tired, red beams of the early setting sun struggle through a rift in the veil of clouds, creep through the bare boughs of the lime-trees, and steal through the glittering frosted flowers which cling to the church windows as if for protection—flowers most beautiful in form, and yet cold and still like a picture of spiritual death. Within the spacious aisles of the church the feeble sun-rays create a solemn twilight full of heavenly longing. The Vespers of the day are drawing to a close. The Magnificat has been finished, and the prayer said. The Abbot has donned his solemn, purple hood, and stands on the throne, while the monks

in the choir pause in expectant silence. The softest notes of the organ faintly intone a melody. And now, in his loudest tone, the Abbot begins the anthem, pouring into it the hopes and longings of all the centuries—his own hopes and those of his spiritual sons and the laments and woes of all pagandom.

“O Sapientia,” he begins in that suppliant tone by which the inspired singer has communicated both sense and feeling to the melody, and the choir of monks devoutly continue the anthem.

Meanwhile the great bell of the monastery has begun to toll like a piteous cry for help, and mingles its mighty voice with the petitions of the singers. As its muffled notes vibrate in the air, they seem to send a holy shudder through the breasts of the monks. Is this shudder for sin committed a penitential feeling awakened by the powerful atmosphere of Advent? Do the monks shudder at the night of death, which has lain so lamentably long over the sinful earth, and enshrouded mankind in darkness? Do they shudder for the many, many millions who even today toil and mourn under the curse of sin? Or is the shudder merely the blessed emotion of the soul that rejoices at its glorious call to bring light into the darkness which lies so unspeakably heavy on pagandom? Filled with hopeful joy, the choir sings the anthem, and the swelling notes of the bell echo their joyful trust.

The Advent bell ceases its pealing. The monks silently withdraw from the church, their hearts filled with emotion. The longing, voiced in the chant and the bells, reverberates in their hearts, and their souls retain their holy emotions.

"Lord, give me souls," sighs one of the monks as he genuflects and, with loving eyes, looks towards Our Savior in the tabernacle.

Deep in meditation, another proceeds along the dim corridors of the monastery. Is he seeking the retirement of his beloved cell? No; without knowing himself how he has come thither, he stands before the door of the Abbot. Knocking, he enters and casts himself before the Abbot's feet, saying: "Here I am, send me forth on Our Master's mission."

Others proceed to their tasks, and communicate the whole glow of their love to every stroke of the pen or the hammer, crying: "Lord, all for the love of Thee and for the salvation of immortal souls!"

The novices proceed to their manual labors. Each hurries to his work, filled with the ardor of youth. His task leads one past the door of the church. He enters quickly to offer a short salutation to the Divine Savior, for such is their beautiful custom. But today he extends his visit also to the altar of Our Lady, and to her his silent glance confesses all. The internal struggle within his soul has subsided; the hard battle concerning his vocation is at an end.

“Mother,” he prays, “it is my desire, my will, to follow the call of thy Son. I wish to save souls for Him. Help me, that I may remain true to Him—true until death.”

O Sapientia, quae ex ore Altissimi prodiisti, attingens a fine usque ad finem, fortiter suaviterque disponens omnia: veni ad docendum nos viam prudentiae! “O Wisdom, which didst proceed from the mouth of the Most High, extending from end to end and disposing all things with strength and sweetness, come and teach us the way of prudence.”

O Wisdom, eternal, uncreated Wisdom, through which all things are made that have been made by the Almighty Creator! The whole glorious universe, the host of suns, the woods that adorn the earth, the towering glaciers in whose icy walls the myriads of twinkling stars are mirrored during the lonely nights of perpetual winter, all the little golden fishes that play in the deepest seabottom—the almighty, all-wise God of Love surveys them all, and pronounces them good. Even to the limits of this universe all is happily ordained.

Then God looks out again inquiringly, anxiously, and calls in anger: “Adam, where art thou?” The ancestor of the human race has lost the way. Sinful desire has misled him. He has strayed into the thickets, and now the abyss of sin separates him from his God. The sullen wilderness of guilt envelops him, and oppresses his soul.

“Father, I will seek out and find Adam’s children, and bring them all back to Thee. I will be to them the way, the truth, and the life.”

In the unrevealed, mysterious consolation of the first joyous message lay concealed this decision of the Eternal Wisdom, and the hope and longing for its fulfilment was a balm for the smarting, bleeding bite of the serpent.

The Son of God has not forgotten His promise. The farther men stray from the true path, the more gloriously can and must the ingenious love of the merciful Wisdom manifest itself. Poor mankind has indeed wandered far, frightfully far, and is straying even farther from its Father’s house and its Father. So far has it often gone that only a few confused religious ideas—a few distorted idols—reveal a remembrance of the one God and Father and of the lost Paradise.

Nineteen hundred years ago the Son of God and Savior of the World began His quest for souls. Right many has He found, conducted into the paradise of His Church, and led heavenwards. That you are of this number, dear reader, you should thank your Savior and His gracious mercy. Two hundred and ninety million Catholics there are—a glorious host walking in the light of truth. But look at the companion picture: More than a thousand millions of non-Christians, true children of Adam, like you and I, shrouded in the forlorn spiritual night of unbelief. Like a wild, confused

primeval forest, this black and pathless horror surrounds them. They can find no exit from these endless woods, choked with the outgrowths of their crimes in which their tired feet are so often caught and tripped. They wander about, and find no pathway to the Light. All their lives they wander, and are succeeded by their children and children's children, who follow in the same footsteps, enveloped in a like darkness. Are they all to pine away in the same black wilderness?

Every time the restless second-hand of your watch springs forward a degree, a pagan soul hurries from its dark confusion into eternity. More than thirty million pagans die in the course of each year. How many have died during the nineteen centuries since the merciful Samaritan began to take the poor and miserable on His compassionate shoulders and carry them home to His Father's house? And what was the life of these hapless millions? Paganism offered them no consolation, nothing to elevate their souls above their wretched surroundings, and nothing to teach them resignation to their lot. No inspiration was theirs, no yearning for higher things. Heavy as lead lay the earth beneath their feet—this earth which they trod without a single glance upwards. And now they have passed beyond, these unnumbered millions. Other millions grope despairingly along the same trail, which, lighted by no gleam of hope, leads through the night of paganism.

No one on earth now thinks of those who during the last nineteen centuries have passed into eternity, ignorant of the loving purpose of God. They are forgotten by their children, by their race, by the entire world. In her watchful care even for her unknown children, the Church alone sends up to the merciful Redeemer her petitions for them, in so far as in their case the hope of heaven is still possible.

But what of those who now or in the coming centuries must find themselves shut off from the light by the towering walls of paganism? Shall no opportunity be given them to reach the bright ports of heaven? When will an Advent dawn for them, heralding the sunny rays which will pierce the dark and pathless thickets and invite them out into the freedom of the children of God? Who will have pity on these helpless ones? Who will, like John the Baptist, go out into the wilderness to announce to them the joyful tidings: "The kingdom of God is at hand"?

Let us take just a fleeting glance at the spiritual condition of the pagan world, touching upon only those forms of religion which have the most adherents: Islam, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Fetichism. These religions have a total of over nine hundred million followers.

Mohammed inscribed his doctrine with iron and blood. His teachings, which are to a large extent the expression of a sickly imagination and

a coarse sensuality, were first collected by his pupils in the Koran. Sensuality and the force of arms have enabled Islam to acquire a mighty empire. Arabia, the Holy Land, and the countries in Northern Africa, where early Christianity thrived, were its first prey. To the Eastern Coast of Africa it continued its victorious advance. India was overrun, and the inhospitable mountain valleys of Tibet were penetrated. Even a large section of European soil, the ancient Byzantine Empire, had to bow to the Crescent. Today two hundred and two million people swear by Allah and the Prophet. A dreary spiritual empire is Islam, and all the drearier in view of its implacable opposition to Christianity. Certain spiritual forces separate the Christian and Mohammedan outlook on life. Fanaticism fights with every weapon against the religion of love—even with fire and sword, whenever such can be done with impunity.

Islam, it is true, also recognizes a single, personal God, but its conception of God and the future life is most peculiar. Our earthly life, confined entirely to our sense experiences, is held to be continued in its heaven. The deluded followers of Islam furthermore believe that they will receive a special reward from God for having combated love with hatred—the Cross with the sword— and, instead of bringing peace and blessings, for having in their wild rage of fanaticism plotted the death and destruction of those

who have sought refuge and peace under the shadow of the Cross.

Who will teach these misguided mortals a higher doctrine? Who will bring them Advent thoughts of a Savior full of saving mercy and gentle goodness? Let them teach themselves a nobler doctrine, do you say? Is it possible to reconcile them with the doctrine of Christ and the religion of love, or are they, as is often asserted, absolutely unconvertible? It is undoubtedly difficult, exceedingly difficult, to lead them towards Christianity. The almost unspeakable efforts which have been already made to convert the Mohammedans, and the comparatively small success attained, reveal clearly the extraordinary difficulty of the work. But should this deter us from working for their salvation?

St. John once walked through fields flowing with milk and honey to prepare the way for the Savior of the World. His voice is stilled, and the Turkish foot has trodden this blessed land into a wilderness. Is the voice of one calling in the wilderness to be heard once more and to awaken new life in the land? Will his summons, "Do penance!" ring out once more from the Holy Land, and be heard in all the countries which are now under the ban of the Prophet of Mecca?

The Hindus of British India are united in a powerful religious empire of two hundred and ten million Brahmans. The Brahman also looks beyond this earthly life, but into what future?

In restless transmigration, his soul will pass from one beast to another until, in this long purification, it has atoned for all the faults of its life on earth, whereupon it is once more absorbed in the universal soul, and thus loses its separate existence. The Brahman meanwhile looks up hopefully to a savior-god, petitioning this spirit to help him (as he thinks it has already often done) to renew the spirit of the world. And how has this god made his appearance? Now in the form of a beast, now as a man, and now as a supernatural being. This savior first appeared as a fish, and revealed to man the mysteries of the creation. He then came as a turtle, and, as such, had to dive to the bottom of the sea, take Mount Mandara on his back, and raise it above the water so that it might serve as a place of refuge for the divine Cow of the Deluge and the goddess of wine. On another occasion this god came as a boar, and dragged out with his tusks the earth which had sunk into the ocean. Again he appeared as a monster, half-lion and half-man. Later, assuming the form of a dwarf, he tricked his enemies, the demons, who represent the evil influence in this dualistic conception of the world. Finally, as a warrior, he used his sword to hew his way through his enemies.

Shall we ridicule this phantastical god? Shall we mock at those who have conceived and trust in such a divinity? Mockery cuts very deeply

when its shafts are directed at the pious beliefs of a human heart. Sarcasm betrays a vicious soul, and is foreign to charitable minds. In its love of truth, and of the God of truth, charity might indeed destroy deceitful idols. But charity never aims to cause pain. It has compassion for the obstinate and deluded worshipers of such images, and, together with this compassion, the helpful desire to conduct them to the *via prudentiae* (the clear path of holy prudence).

Buddhism extends like a lamentable plague through northern India, over the Plateau of Tibet, and thence to the picturesque archipelago of the Island Empire, under the shelter of whose growing strength the decaying faith hopes for a new bloom. One hundred and twenty millions voice the complaints of Buddhism, which shows them no savior in the hour of their trials. Buddhism really knows no God, who watches over the human race, guides them with His wisdom, and lends them His help. It strives to attain natural virtues, not because a Creator must demand moral greatness from his intelligent creatures, or because any reward has been determined for virtue. To the Buddhist, life, or existence on this earth, is the substance of all sorrow and suffering. The gloomy prospect of returning to this world of sorrow and trouble dismays him, and affords the motive for all his moral strivings. After death he must always return to this earth and endure and suffer until

he has finally attained goodness. Then, finally, will this life with all its sorrows and anxieties come to an end. And where is the end? In Nirvana, an awful absorption in stark nothingness. To be absorbed in this nothingness, which is the happy goal of his aims, he subjects himself to these severe mortifications which often develop into a wild fury against the body.

How wildly deceitful are such Advent longings! To desire Nirvana, nothingness, so that it might swallow up life, earthly and everlasting! Like a flickering lamp, extinguished by the whirlwind of life, shall our souls die and disappear? No fewer than one hundred and twenty million hearts nourish this hope with an impatience equal to that with which we long for salvation.

Confucius also, who has two hundred and forty millions of admiring and adoring disciples (mostly Chinese), never ventured to pronounce the name of God in his maxims. All his efforts are directed towards promoting the happiness of man on this earth. To a life beyond the grave he gives no thought; the earth and earthly happiness are his heaven. Many of his sentences sound beautiful. But why did he never call out to his disciples, and why does not one of his learned followers and worshipers today bid their host of adherents: "*Levate capita vestra*" (Raise up your heads) or "*Sursum corda*" (Raise up your hearts)? Raise them up to a happiness beyond

this earth, to a God who will not deny man happiness, who has promised heaven to mankind! Confucianism does not do this, because it seeks not God, but only self. And the poor, wretched people follow these teachers and guides in pitiable spiritual darkness. No ray of heavenly knowledge is allowed to enlighten them, lest it should dim the glitter of their master, Confucius. They may not look upon the Eternal Light, the Light of lights, lest they should be attracted by its gracious beams. Human pride towers mountain-high above this spiritual kingdom, and blocks every path along which the meek Savior of the World might approach.

When will these mountains be removed? When will the ways be made level? Are we satisfied to sit still and wait until they sink down of themselves? The Himalayas will subside to the level of the plains before the pride of men's hearts is dissolved. Let us put our hands to the task. If every one of the two hundred and ninety million Catholics would do his share, this gigantic mountain in the Far East would gradually crumble away, and the Cross would soon be established there as a finger-post pointing to heaven and challenging the attention of all men to their one and eternal aim.

What more lamentable figures, from the spiritual standpoint, could be found than the fetich worshipers of Africa, Australia, and the South Sea Islands, who cast themselves down before

strange idols, adore a divinity in animals, and deck themselves with all kinds of charms as a protection against evil spirits? The number of these misguided people reaches the shocking total of one hundred and fifty millions! In many cases their ideas of a divinity and their sense of religious veneration have become so debased that only with the greatest difficulty can one discover any conception of a God or of divine worship. And even then it proves to be a distorted and repulsive caricature. Horrifying apparitions incessantly confront them through life. To win the favor of the evil spirits, sacrifices are offered. All recollection of a God, a good God, is gone, but the curse of sin flourishes on from generation to generation.

One might think that these people would sigh for a Redeemer who would free them from the chains of the demons. So piteous is their condition, however, so terrified are they, so depressed by the domination of the evil spirits, and so completely deceived by their own blindness, that no conception of spiritual salvation or longing for such a liberation can penetrate their hearts. "*Lasciate ogni speranza, voi che entrate*" (Leave all hope behind, ye who enter here), is the motto which Dante places on the gate of hell. Unless we bring to them the Victor over hell, and tell them of heaven and its captivating glories, no conception of salvation and no vision of heaven can ever reach them.

“To prepare the way for the Lord is the greatest task that we can perform on earth” (J. Klug). Long ago our Savior sent St. John the Baptist as His precursor to make straight the way to bring souls to Him. He later placed His grace and His salvation in the hands of His apostles and disciples and of all who love Him. Each of us according to his ability and in his own way should contribute to this work, and help to advance it. In this manner we shall best co-operate with God’s grace, which, while no man can force its direction, is wont to follow the path that has been bridged by noble hearts. It is true that human co-operation or convincing preaching is not a necessary preparation for this all-conquering grace. The voice of the Lord can cast a persecutor of Christians to the earth so that he rises conquered and asks: “Lord, what wilt Thou that I should do?” But the eye of the Lord can also rest with joy on the widow’s mite, although He who called the innumerable worlds from nothing by His almighty word can dispense with all our co-operation in the accomplishment of His holy will. Not because God needs us, should we devote ourselves to His service, but because it pleases God to allow the children of men to co-operate with Him in the inscrutable administration and working of His inexhaustible grace.

The usual, if ever mysterious, course of grace seems to be to follow in the tracks which merci-

ful charity has left behind it. Yet it is the all-good love of God which gives the first impulse to a consuming zeal for souls, and which accepts and gives fruition to all missionary labors. God's love removes the curse from earthly clay, and glorifies the gifts which are given to men for the promotion of the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

"The purest and most sublime is the love which forgets itself to bring happiness to a human soul, since this is to 'walk along the heights'" (J. Klug). The way to the heights, the *via prudentiae*, it might also well be named. "Lord, I am ready. I also mean to do my share. I also wish to walk these heights. Lord, help me. I wish to lead others to Thy ways, to help others. Accept my will, bless it and keep it."

II. LIFE'S GREATEST NEED

O ADONAI et dux Israel, qui Moisi in igne flammae rubi aparuisti et ei in Sina legem dedisti: veni ad redimendum nos in brachio extento!

"O Adonai, Leader of the people of Israel, who didst appear to Moses in the flames of the burning bush and on Sinai didst give him the laws, come with extended arms to redeem us!"

What a happy people and what a blessed leader! Moses stands as the liberator of his people, as intermediary between them and their

God, as the instrument of God's intervention between the Chosen People and the oppressor who is persecuting them. Like a devastating avalanche, the floods of the Red Sea sweep down on the enemies of Israel, engulfing horses and riders in the depths. Moses hears the laments and outcries of his people; he repairs before Jehovah, returns and strikes the rock, which gives forth its precious water. The people hunger; flocks of quail come and lay themselves before the starving people, and manna rains daily from the sky. High up on the mountain stands Moses with outstretched arms. As long as he prays with extended hands, asking for mercy and safety, Israel conquers its enemies.

So proceeds a godly people through the desert of this life. Its object, the country for which it longs, is the Promised Land, its eternal home.

Herein life's greatest need is revealed. This need is often bitter and pressing even for those who cry: "Lord, help me, I sink." Still more bitter is the need for those who do not raise their sorrowful eyes to God. No word of consolation answers the anguished cry of their hearts, because the pagan soul feels utterly lonesome and deserted in its oppressive grief. Oftentimes, unable to help itself, it feels it must seek aid from earthly sources.

How complaining to my ear was the hollow, abrupt clang of the bell which I heard two years ago when I was hurrying through the spacious

grounds of the Shi Tennoji (the Temple of the Four Kings of Heaven), in Osaka, Japan. Here stood a small, deserted little temple, looking so friendly with its red balconies and roofs which stood out vividly from the green of the surrounding trees. Beyond was an open, bare hall, with several huge drums decorating its walls. Above a group of trees towers the huge pagoda. A shattered pine-tree casts great black shadows on the wooden building, surrounded by the light blue of heaven. One over the other, successive roofs are airily suspended, each smaller than the one immediately below, but the heavily carved casements, the deep colors and the very weather-beaten appearance of the structure give it an air of strength and solidity. Shrines of varying dimensions range round the pagoda in picturesque irregularity. Among these move the gaping multitude who have appropriated the temple grounds as their promenade. As I was carried along with this streaming throng, I again heard, quite near me now, the heavy tones of the bell between the chaffing and laughter. To one side stood a little temple, unnoticed by the promenaders. I looked across a little bare court into the inner shrine, which was cut off by a grating. Here, surrounded by some paper lamps and colored banners, was a statue.

I slipped out of the hurrying sea of humanity, and surveyed the shrine. Hence, I thought, must the notes of the bell come. A man was seated

before the door of the grating; his hand grasped a bell-rope tightly, while his lips now murmured gently, and now shouted aloud prayers which re-echoed in the interior of the temple. At regular intervals, as if to emphasize his words, he tugs at the bell-rope, and down on the hollow bell falls the heavy wooden beam, which hangs outside the bell and serves as a clapper. No Advent bell is this, inspiring hope by its tones. The poor man! He strives to arouse his god or spirit, who persists in sleeping, and before whom he wishes to lay his petitions.

Will his spirit hear him? The Psalmist could instruct him as to such spirits: "They have ears and hear not; they have mouths and speak not." Unfortunate man, you may ring until you despair before this god hears or helps you. And, if any consolation does come to you, it comes not from the spirit of darkness whom you have invoked, but from the God of Light whom you know not, but who nevertheless feels love and compassion for you. If you could only call on Him, and knew of His gracious mercy! But who is there to tell you of Him, and picture to you His goodness?

What a blessed Advent-time of preparation we enjoyed in our youth—a time so happy that it sped us quickly along to the stormy realities of manhood! During the sunny springtime of our early years, a good mother taught us to make the Sign of the Cross each morning and evening on a forehead still unclouded with the slightest

care. This sign was to protect and bless, and it has done so; it was to arm us for the coming battle of life, and to serve as a clear, bright finger-post showing us the way to heaven.

Now when hard trials arrive and your soul needs comfort, you can take refuge under the Cross. If your pure, true, holy charity threatens to grow cold, you can rekindle its fervor in the Heart of Jesus, which poured out its burning Sacred Blood on the Cross. From this Heart straight to yours comes the admonition to draw near to Him, and neither to avoid nor fear the Cross. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself." How often has a sorrowful eye, looking through a mist of tears, sought help and consolation in the Cross, and found it! At such a moment the whole world seems sad—a "valley of tears," wherein all joy fades to sorrow, wherein all happiness vanishes in grief, wherein hope and love are dissolved in streams of tears, and nothing seems left of all the peace which our child-soul enjoyed, of all the pleasure with which the springtime sun of youth lifted up our innocence. Nothing remains except a sea of hot and bitter tears, eyes red from weeping, and a heart so overflowed with sorrow that it would gladly burst because it cannot contain so much grief.

But, like a lightning flash which lights up the darkest clouds with its fiery shaft and is seen even through our closed eyelids, the Cross

appears before our tear-dimmed eyes, with all its consolation, its summons to hope, its message of overflowing love—the Cross with which a loving mother made you intimate. You draw near the Crucifix, clasp the extended arms, and impress a kiss on its hard wood. The tears still course down your cheeks, but within your heart a change has come. Your eyes now seek the figure on the Cross in holy resignation and blessed hope.

I had one such experience at the city of Kobe in Japan, and have since been edified by many more such consoling scenes. With a thankful glance towards heaven, I then thought of my good mother, who taught me to fold my hands and made the Sign of the Cross on my forehead, mouth, and breast.

Outside Kobe rises a wooded hill. High above the street, in front of the town, stretches a wooden beam, resting on two strong posts which sink into the ground on either edge of the road. All are painted a fiery red, and executed with a certain fineness and breadth of conception that is artistic and impressive despite its simplicity. This construction is a kind of entrance gate to the Shintoist Shrine. No Advent presentiment or atmosphere here! If perchance there be any Advent longings, they are unappeased; if any Advent lamentations, they are unheard.

We follow the path that mounts up through the woods which cover the hillside, and at inter-

vals reach little open terraces—resting places for tired pilgrims. The higher we ascend, the more numerous are the pilgrims. Life's needs drive them all thither. And now we are near the shrine. Do you wish to form some conception of the number who have made the pilgrimage to this shrine in recent times? Count the fluttering scrips on which the sick and oppressed inscribe their petitions for help, or their grief over one of their loved ones. These hang in such profusion from the twigs of every tree and bush, that the surrounding wood seems to bear a snow-white cover like a cherry orchard in bloom. These scrips of paper contain a lamentation, a prayer for help, often only a single word, but all alike are inspired by need or grief.

Around the shrine itself swarms a silent throng of petitioners. In the antechambers, they strike their hands together intermittently to emphasize their passionate supplications, and make low obeisances in the direction of the holy image in the inner shrine. Up and down sways the crowd, and their prayers rise like a stormy billow, interrupted by the clapping of hands.

And now the swaying curtain of worshipers draws aside. We look through the rift in the crowd, and the shrine is openly revealed to our view. We behold the figure of a fox, carved out of wood or carved in stone, with a roll of paper in his jaws!

I must admit that a certain awesome feeling of respect for the devotion and reverence of even misguided humanity caused me an unusual emotion. At first sight of the incongruous image, I had indeed to suppress an inclination to smile, albeit in sympathy. However, the impulse immediately vanished, as it were unkind to laugh at our poor, mistaken brethren. An honest sincerity of purpose always merits our recognition, even when it leads into serious error. Here it was the unfortunate and oppressed who asked for aid.

My view of the idol, however, was soon interrupted, for the circle of worshipers closed in again. A mother had slipped her child into an opening in the crowd, and stationed herself beside it. Carefully she arranges the hands of her little one, so that they are nicely folded. She then shows the child repeatedly how to clap together its little hands, while making the graceful prostrations.

What an attractive picture they make—still more attractive because of its homely sadness. If only this mother had brought her child before a picture of Our Lady, and had said to it: "Child, pray to your dear Mother in heaven. She will tell her Divine Son how seriously ill your father is, and Jesus, who has healed so many sick, will make him well again. Child, address your prayers devoutly to your heavenly Mother."

If all these worshipers around the shrine were to raise their hands and hearts to heaven and pray: "Our Father who art in heaven . . . deliver us from evil." Advent hopes would undoubtedly console their anxious souls. But now they go away un comforted; the sharp winds rend the tablets to which their hopes and desires were confided, and splashing rains obliterate their written prayers. Their timid, hesitating hope is destroyed.

Into the tropical heat of Africa, also, Advent longs to return—not in icy winter clothing nor wrapped in the frosty veil of clouds or scourging snow-storms. The piercing rays of a huge and fiery sun which travels vertically over the land have rolled up great banks of clouds, and distant thunder heralds the approach of the season of rains. The seeds have already been entrusted to the hard earth, and a few rainstorms will ensure their germination. But alas! the clouds pass by. They will return to-morrow? Once more they pile up. A thick black wall stands on the horizon, mounts slowly in the sky, dissolves, and vanishes in dark, star-sown night.

The negroes now crowd around the magician, murmuring their reproaches. He explains that he has done his best. A mightier magician is thwarting his efforts, but he will surely expel him. However, day after day elapses. No rain comes, and the sowing will be ruined, unless the drought ends. A year of famine raises its repulsive visage before the people. Only one

remedy is now left, namely, a sacrifice to the evil spirits that they may even now liberate the rain-clouds, and to the rain-god that his anger may end. The noisy sacrificial dance begins. A little maize and barley is offered as the sacrificial gift to the jealous spirits.

There in the corner of a field a crowd of black children have gathered to dance around a small, pointed hut. It is a children's game, but it has a hidden significance. In spite of all their exuberance of spirits, the children do not venture to uproot the shoots of the maize, nor do they interfere with the stalks of manioc, six feet in length, which lie in small bundles on the ground—the precious shoots for the new planting. Here they have been used to form a small hut, about one yard in diameter, and within on the ground stand finely fashioned bowls of rice and maize. After the children have continued their dance for some time, all the grass around the hut is trampled down, and the sand is trodden firm under the bare feet of the little ones.

This custom, which owes its origin partly to the children's spirit of imitation and partly to the teaching of their parents, has for its object "to make the sun disappear and the rain come." So at least we were informed by the Mweraman, who stood near us and gazed with evident pleasure on the doings of the children.

Fortunate is he who, while still subject to childhood's imitative impulse, has seen his father

and mother pray side by side, who has himself learned to pray in the pious, contented days of youth: "Our Father . . . give us this day our daily bread."

There is but one who can and does help us in our earthly needs: He who struck off the chains of slavery from Israel, who led His people through the wilderness, supplied them with food, drink, and clothing, who announced to them, and to us, from Sinai His commandment: "And you shall serve the Lord your God, that I may bless your bread and your waters, and may take away sickness from the midst of thee. And I will turn the backs of all thy enemies before thee." (Ex., xxiii, 25, 27.)

Life's need—the burden of our souls—teaches us to pray. And Our Father in heaven is so kind. But should not this Divine Mercy, which comforts and brightens our lives like the rosy dawn of a coming eternal day, encounter responsive feelings in our hearts so that these may join in love's Canticle of canticles. This Divine Mercy should encounter in our hearts charity, mercy, and compassion for those poorest of all, to whom none has yet explained the clear and safe itinerary of God's commandments, and who have yet to hear of the Prince of Peace, the Source of both peace and consolation. Let us cultivate compassion for these poor folk who have the very same object in life as we, who are also children of the Father who is in heaven.

III. SOCIAL MISERY

Our Divine Savior once told of a tiny mustard seed, so very small that no one noticed it. Yet it developed into a tree, and the birds of the air and the peoples of the earth flocked to its branches to dwell in its shade and taste of its fruit. Christ's Church on earth, which dispenses His graces, has developed into such a tree. Our Savior Himself was the Divine seed from which grew this tree with its saving branches. When He gave His life for the world on the Cross, He bore His most precious fruit. Streaming down from this tree, the Blood of Our Redeemer flowed over the earth, removing from it the curse of sin.

If only the heathen peoples had some conception of the blessing—even of the civilizing influence—which issued, and still issues, from the wood of the Cross, they would hie to its holy shade and there find refuge from their restless, aimless, and fruitless yearnings. A hopeless impotence now dogs all their upward strivings like a dark shadow, and all their actions! If they could only realize their plight, how quickly would they come to pluck from the tree of the Cross the precious fruit of national strength and prosperity—to break off a little branch from this tree, and place it in the bitter water of their earthly strivings, to sweeten this water and lend it an eternal value!

But when will they come? When will they hear the joyful tidings of the peace of the Cross and of the fruits of grace which grow on this miraculous tree?

Hark! The Advent Bells are sounding again and seek to awaken all those peoples who have dreamt of civilization while slumbering more than a thousand years—all peoples whose culture has developed like a short-lived blossom, but has withered, because godless; all peoples whose culture scarcely extends beyond the satisfaction of their senses.

“O radix Jesse,” begins the song, and already in the swelling tones of the chanter we see the root of Jesse develop, we see the boughs spread and the tree of God overspread the world. And yet millions of people still lie cowering in the deep shadow of death, wherein every instigation to a higher life, every seed of a higher culture, is stifled.

O radix Jesse, qui stas in signum populorum, super quem continebunt reges os suum, quem gentes deprecabuntur: veni ad liberandum nos, jam noli tardare! “O Root of Jesse, who dost stand as a sign for the peoples, before whom kings restrain their voices and whom the people supplicate: come to deliver us, and no longer delay.”

In its pride the Far East rejects Western culture and with it Christianity. At most it adopts from the West only certain selected cultural

institutions, which are separated from the soil wherein they attained their greatness, and deprived of the Christian spirit which animated them. Eastern Asia has indeed created some beautiful works of art, has carefully preserved these treasures of the past ages, and presents them for the wonder and admiration of the stranger. Many visitors expect to find in the East primitive and uncouth people, and are therefore astonished at their cultural achievements. The Japanese awaken our astonishment by virtue of their cultural superiority, and immediately the whole East is classed as a unit and enveloped in the glorious mantle of a four-thousand-years' civilization. In comparison with this the cultural products adopted from Europe seem indeed like a new stain on a venerable cloak. Adopted to a large extent without much understanding, they yet in many cases cleverly conceal how impossible it was for the Oriental mind to follow unguided the spiritual paths which lead to the understanding of the thing itself and its inner significance.

This one question, however, always confronts us. Do all these external elements of civilization—whether native or borrowed, whether inherited from their ancestors or newly created—constitute a real “culture”? On one hand, we have the glorious porcelain and textile industries of Japan, the beautiful silk products of China, Corea's glory in having discovered printing a

century before Gutenberg, China's hieroglyphic writings, which throughout the Middle Empire held the whole learned world so in thrall that to know as many as possible of these mysterious symbols was synonymous with learning. On the other hand, we have the railroads, steamships, and electric motors which have been imported from America. But do all these things, together with one or two other technical or economic achievements, constitute a sound conception of culture, perfectly proportioned like a little house of colored building bricks?

From little Corea smiles upon us a beautiful family life, which, like a tender rose, blooms on the sound stem of monogamy and spreads its fragrance through the land. But over in Japan, the trusty bonds of family are being dissolved together with the holy bonds of marriage, as when a fierce hailstorm scatters the soft blossoms and lashes to pieces the green leaves. Well may Japan be called the paradise of children, since there no father's rod nor mother's angry tone terrifies the naughty child: so much the more surely will they lose this paradise, when the serpents of pleasure crawl across their life's highway.

In India the iron wedges of the rigid religious laws, which are the outcome of the caste system, separate the people and destroy social life, while piercing the consciousness of each individual like tormenting goads. Who can know all the

numberless little precepts which are laid down for every caste? Every moment must the Brahman infringe them, and only a perpetual and painful succession of ablutions and penances can in some measure restore the peace of his life.

Everywhere throughout the Far East the traces of a higher culture are visible. But its development is stunted like the miniature trees in a Japanese garden, wherein freakish effects are the sole aim, and the sun of heaven cannot decide how the plants of God shall develop.

Asiatic culture cannot unfold and develop. Why? Because the curse of sin lies heavy on the spiritual powers of the Asiatic people. The imperious mind of man desires once more to show itself as dominating the entire world. It has ascended a lofty tower, from which it hopes to survey the whole earth. The Tower of Babel is indeed fallen, but man's pride still leads him astray, and whatever intellectual or cultural works he creates with his personal faculties please him like the weak and unsubstantial house of cards, which he disdains, but which rejoice his children's hearts. Greece with its over-refined sensuousness, and pagan Rome sunk in its immorality, with their gaping social wounds, offer only a few pages of godless human and cultural history. They are but another illustration of the gloomy shadows which still rest over the pagan lands. Like impenetrable clouds, they shut off the heavens from view. Then, when the

power of Rome began to wane, a tiny opening appeared in the gloomy sky, and the star of promise sent a ray of consolation through the earthly night. Thank God, the starry heaven has opened wider; although many heavy clouds still lower in the firmament, and cast their dreary shadows on the weeping, despondent world, which gropes in darkness after civilization.

There is a learned ring to those sentences of Confucius, in which he reproachfully challenges his pupils and worshipers. These sentences begin with the words: "Ye Despise." So must the Christian in China often hear: "Ye despise the teaching of Confucius, which regulates so excellently social life!" But this reproach is quickly silenced when a catechist explains: "Whatever Confucius tells you in his teachings, we Christians also have, only much more beautiful and clear, and not merely this alone, but much else besides that ennobles and elevates man, that sanctifies him and makes him happy on earth as well as beyond—in heaven. You have not even a heaven; of heaven you know nothing. Your whole doctrine forms only a part of our fifth commandment. The beautiful relations which your Confucius wished to establish between subject and ruler, children and parents, husband and wife, brothers and friends—all this God includes in His fifth commandment which He ordained to be observed by us and all mankind. But He has also issued nine other command-

ments, of which you know nothing. If we observe these commandments, we shall be happy on earth and for all eternity."

Are we to seek family happiness among the primitive peoples of Africa, where a low conception of the position of the female sex and a life of stupid resignation on the part of the wife beclouds the bond of marriage? While daughters are sold as a cheap chattel by their fathers, and each wife that a moderately well-to-do negro can maintain represents to him only a certain material value, because he can thus cultivate more land and can thus (as he thinks) enjoy life better, the welfare of the people is affected to its very roots. Human dignity, the freedom of the wife, family happiness and family peace—these bases of a sound nation, these germs of true culture, must develop under the free impulses of a living Christian thought. Under the sun of a living Christianity they ripen into the precious fruit of national welfare, whether springing from the ruins of an old, decayed civilization or from the hot soil of the tropics.

Tired and dreary, one's eye seeks all pagandom for the moving works of charity, for the heroic courage of a love which wastes itself in the service of mankind. Such a conception of love is unknown, not only to the cannibal races, who greedily devour their slain foes, but also to the Chinese mother, who heartlessly surrenders her child to the equally cruel floods of the river.

Alas for the sick among pagan peoples! Repulsed by their own relatives, how can they hope for help from the stranger? It is indeed true that they would not act otherwise if they were well and some stranger sought their compassion.

Woe also to the unlucky poor—doubly unlucky because hated even by those who look upon them, while enjoying all the material comforts of life. Throughout pagandom seems to rule the attitude towards the poor which was once voiced by an otherwise noble, highly educated pagan: "No poor should be in the State: such people should be banned from the towns, the marketplace and the countryside, so that no such animal [such is his word] shall be found in the whole State" (Plato, "De legibus," xi).

Nowhere in pagandom, not even in Eastern Asia, which is so often held up as the object of wonder, has culture undertaken the education of the people. Where primary schools now exist, the incitement to found them originated from the civilized European states. The idea of stooping down to the common people and raising them up was brought into the world by Christ. It was the Son of God who stooped down from heaven to the very earth to uproot the thorns and thistles amongst which the nations sowed their plans and their hopes.

Behold the extensive void of the heathen world! Social misery stalks with heavy, mournful strides over these lands, and tramples down the happi-

ness and hopes of the peoples. When will the rising dawn of the approaching Savior banish the powers of darkness, and drive them back into the gloomy night from which they emerged?

Never was a cultural epoch ushered in with such noble impetus and such fertility as the era of the Cross. Wherever the Cross was planted, a new and unexpected culture began to blossom. What was the condition of the now civilized countries 1800 years ago? Little fundamental difference can be found between their inhabitants then and the peoples of the East to-day, or the primitive tribes of tropical climes. We appreciate and pride ourselves on the triumph of civilization within our frontiers. But do we think of the blessed influence of the Cross, which has been the cause of this wonderful transformation?

An extraordinary movement now stalks boldly through the land. It is the haughty procession of those who enjoy in overflowing measure the cultural blessings inherited from their pious fathers. They hope to build still higher the same edifice, but believe they can dispense with the Cross and its truth and strength, and have therefore excluded it from their lives and pursuits. While this attitude must be condemned as rank ingratitude, it also connotes a want of understanding. Many a son has inherited a beautiful palace from his father, but none of his father's spirit. Very soon his subjects rise in revolt;

decay quickly seizes hold of the lordly demesnes; the lands begin to grow wild, the buildings fall down, and one fine day the foolish son, with a bundle of old clothes over his shoulder, has to seek refuge among strangers. As a sad souvenir of better days, he cuts a stick from the neglected woods, which were once his own, and which now shuts off from view his former home. Henceforth he will be in the service of a stranger, will eat another's bread and work for another.

With religion the morality of a people must disappear; with morality, national vigor; and with national vigor, culture. In the misty depths of sensuousness and in the murky hot-house of over-refined material pleasures a languishing race may survive for an interval. The air of the mountain-peaks is too raw for such a people, who will no longer essay a climb to the summit. Ever sicker and weaker they grow, and finally their little reserve of strength gives way. Then the pagan world may justly point to their native culture, and declare: "We, uncivilized people, are better than these!"

The social needs of the pagan lands should warn us of the necessity of fervent prayer for our own native land, and of true co-operation for its higher welfare. If we help in both ways, neglecting neither prayer nor active co-operation, we shall attain the proper adjustment of an all-embracing charity.

“Peoples of Europe and America, guard your most sacred possessions!” Such is the watchful policy that commends itself to those whose judgment is based on the survey of the past. The “yellow peril” is perhaps less threatening than the unbelief which is spreading everywhere to combat Christianity. Even Buddhism is being summoned to-day into an alliance against Christian beliefs. To convert the Oriental peoples to Christianity, to retain our Western civilization true to Christ, may prove our true salvation from the dangers that threaten us.

IV. THE LOST PARADISE

A man and a woman walk out of the gate of Paradise. Their trembling hands conceal their faces so that not even the Angel guarding the entrance can see their unspeakable grief and the bitter tears that burn their bloodshot eyes. Shame-faced they hurry through the portal, as if the blazing sword of the Angel had changed the whole glorious garden into a sea of fire. A few steps more and they are outside in the broad world, their lost Paradise behind them. They seem to hear thunderous crashes, and blinding flashes pierce the air. Anxiously they raise their eyes, and turn partly around, but nothing of the glory and beauty in which they have lived is any longer visible. A wide, unbounded field of thorns and thistles extends where recently

the earthly Paradise sheltered God's presence, His peace and the refulgence of heaven. They look ahead. There on the road which they are to follow—whither, they know not—stands Death, leaning on his scythe. Around him are his companions: Hunger, a lean figure of terrifying pallor; Poverty in tattered rags, languishing and freezing; Sickness, a piteous crouching figure, shaking with fits of coughing; Old Age, collapsed on the ground; wild hosts of beings with fiery darts in their hands ready to be hurled into the hearts of men to enkindle brotherly hate, discord, hostility, murder, and war.

The greatest evil is guilt. Guilt bows man's proud neck low, and gnaws at his heart with incessant tiny bites until, with the last pulse-beat, that heart's beating ceases in death. Truly, the wages of sin is death. And this wages all men have paid, or will pay.

But why, we may complain, did our first parents burden themselves with this fearful guilt, and then leave us, their children, this sinful inheritance, which none of us can refuse?

The tree of life produced noble fruits full of heavenly vital power. But only the children of God could eat of this fruit. Our first parents lost their divine sonship, and have bequeathed this loss, as a dreary inheritance, to all their descendants. They had not calculated on encountering such bitter tribulation, on finding themselves confronted with greedy death.

Ever louder grows their lamentation. Shall they return? Paradise has disappeared, and the gate is shut against their return. "Claudit et nemo aperit," they cry in anguish. "God has closed the door, and none can open it. God is just. He told us that He must drive us forth if we ate of the forbidden fruit; that He would close the Garden against us, and none would open it again. He has kept His word. He will then also keep the word that He spoke when He promised He would send one who could and will open again the gate."

A timid hope in the veiled future then arises in their hearts. All their woes and consolation, their laments and trials, their loud weepings and concealed hopes, are henceforth bound up with the far-off Advent Bells which will celebrate Him who is to come, and who is to banish death and open once more the gate of heaven.

O clavis David et sceptrum domus Israel, qui aperis et nemo claudit, claudis et nemo aperit: veni et educ vinctum de domo carceris sedentem in tenebris et umbra mortis! "O Key of David and Sceptre of the House of Israel, who openeth and no man shutteth, who shutteth and no man openeth: come and rescue from his chains the prisoner who sits in darkness and the shadow of death."

Will mighty death submit to banishment? Will death, which was invoked by sin, allow itself to be driven from its lurking place before

the gate of Paradise? A mightier power—an almighty one—will conquer it and force it into His service, so that all men who really and earnestly desire it, can not only reach the gate of heaven and gaze upon and admire the wonders within, but may also enter into the everlasting, inalienable enjoyment of its glories. That this is so, we have the strongest grounds for confidence. Human nature shrinks indeed from the thought of death, but the eye of faith seeks longingly beyond for the heaven now reopened to us, and this faith awakens a joyful echo which changes the solemn tolling of the burial bell into Advent peals of joyful longing. Yes, O my Savior, Thou wilt come to conduct us home, for we earnestly desire to fare home to Thee.

Greetings for Our Father in heaven, and the joyful cries of a child as it approaches its lost home—such are the messages we should receive and send in the Advent Bells.

But what of those who do not know the kind Father of all, and who are still seated in darkness and the shadow of death? In their lives death still represents all the misery and bitterness of sin, and its fearful figure still leers at them on the conclusion of a life full of privation and sorrow.

What, for example, will the night of death reveal to the poor Corean, who has spent his whole life under a crushing burden, oppressed with care and sorrow and work? Alas! we know

not. One wish only can we entertain that would bring happiness to his heart.

Recently his rich neighbor died—not as our poor Corean friend must die, after his daily struggles have gradually frayed his thread of life, but—after full enjoyment of all that life can give. “He had such a relish for the sweet rice-wine. He could drink it every day, as much as he desired—more than was good for his health. I must perforce abstain from it for months at a time, and how often have I longed for a draught! No wish, no pleasure, used he to deny himself. And what a beautiful death he finally died! What consolation he had at the end! I saw his two sons bring the coffin to their father’s bedside—a coffin made of strong, beautifully carved oaken boards. The eyes of the dying man lighted up with keen pleasure when his sons removed the coffin’s lid, and he saw the finely wrought planks. ‘Now I die happy,’ said he, ‘for I have seen the glorious coffin which has been made for me.’ Such were his last words. Calm and transfigured, he continued to gaze in happy silence on his coffin until death came to claim him. And I must plod on despairingly. No longer have I a son to prepare a coffin for me. I must die unconsolated, in the misery which has harassed me during life, and which will inevitably pursue me to the grave.”

Such is the complaint of the poor. But what are his wishes and longings in that solemn hour

when the twilight of his life darkens into night? He desires a coffin—any coffin, even if it be not so costly as his rich neighbor's. And does he desire nothing further? Absolutely nothing, for such is the only consolation he knows. It would indeed be a source of great gratification to him if his two sons, who unfortunately have died before him in a wretchedness equal to his own, would now come and fashion the coffin in his presence. We should not think them heartless in so acting, for they would be only obeying their father's wishes and following an ancient popular custom in rendering him this last service. They would then place the coffin before the wretched bed of straw on which the father had lain down to die, so that he might enjoy the rapture of all those fortunate ones who can see their own coffins. A coffin would compensate him for his whole life which was so rich in suffering and labor, so poor in earthly goods and happiness. It would be a full, and in fact the only, compensation! Poor, poor man! But you are no poorer than those who have had only this single consolation to take with them into the vale beyond.

But is this all that life holds for these people? Does the approach of death bring them no broader outlook than is bounded by the sides of an empty coffin?

Consider, on the other hand, the death-struggle which took place on the hill outside Jerusalem. Death, which has hitherto ridden uncon-

quered through the world and trodden down all opposition, will today celebrate the greatest victory of its four thousand years' warfare against mankind, and no such other fight will it ever again wage as long as man's straying feet wander over the earth, hurrying him to death in the very poverty from which he would fain escape. The Son of God hangs in agony on the Cross. One hour more, and He will gasp out the words: "It is consummated." Gasp them out? No, shout them aloud like a paeon of victory to the world, up to heaven, and down to the very kingdom of death. And death, now sure of its victory, will be overcome, and will thenceforth begin to work in the service of merciful charity.

To the right and left of the Savior hang two thieves, groaning on their crosses. The one joins the laughing, derisive crowd below him in their mockery of the still Sufferer hanging above. The other thief begs for mercy, and to him Jesus turns His head and assures him: "This day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

Those standing about the Cross heard Him perhaps, but paid no attention to His words. But, above in heaven, the words of Our Savior mingled, like an Advent hymn, with the deep mourning of the angels as they wept over the Cross of their God. Through the sea of suffering, through the gate of death, the Son of God is returning home, and those whom death takes down from the Cross with their Savior will

follow Him to heaven. Countless are the hosts that will follow Him. What a glorious Advent is this! Paradise is open again, and none is debarred. It is open for all who choose the path to heaven.

But what of the others? What of the pagans who neither know God, nor have any yearning for heaven? Only the omniscient and all-just God knows the extent of His mercy.

During my visit to German East Africa in 1905, the negroes rose in insurrection, not only in the regions near the coast, but also in the interior regions near Lake Nyassa, thirty days' journey from the ocean. With tears in my eyes, I had to stand by and witness splendid missionary stations reduced to ashes, after which the missionary Fathers and Sisters fled with me to Lake Nyassa. Father Francis alone, filled with his zeal for souls, allowed himself to be persuaded to remain by the assurances given by the chief, Kunyama. Kunyama, however, simulated friendship, intending to betray Father Francis. It was he who seized the innocent missionary, and haled him before the Grand Sultan Mputa. Father Francis sealed his love for the negroes with his bloody death.

After the murder of the missionary, the rebellion burst out with renewed fury. One of the escaped missionaries returned under protection of the military expedition, which was dispatched into the disaffected area. He was a

witness of the bitter fighting which resulted in the capture of forty chieftains, including Mputa and Kunyama. After these were condemned to death by court-martial, the Father began the difficult task for which he had journeyed into this hostile land. He wished to save these poor, blind beings at the last hour. They were lost to earth; he must, if at all possible, win them for heaven. He had the great pleasure and satisfaction of baptizing twenty-four of them shortly before their execution. The others refused to learn anything of baptism, desiring to die pagans.

Proudly and calmly, as is common among the negroes, they mounted the scaffold. Glowing Advent lights may have transfigured the path which had so suddenly been changed into a ladder to heaven for those who were now relieved of their blood-guilt. It is our fond hope that some angel brought them consolation in their death-agony, and that to-day they are in Paradise. There is joy in heaven over one sinner who does penance.

Of the others who rejected the saving hand offered them by grace, let us not inquire, for their case rests with God. I had known one of these others, Chief Pampalioto, who had formerly ruled his people with great severity, but who was then almost a physical wreck. His case thus caused me special distress. Only two weeks before the rising I had visited him, and had been

received with such kindness as only a negro sultan can show. There was a school in his territory, and he had witnessed its erection by the Mission with evident pleasure. Upon my arrival, he had endeavored to show his interest by sitting on the bench with the children and participating in the lesson. The rising had again awakened his old lust for war, and fanned his cooling passion for arson and murder. And this was the end—an end without end, a beginning of eternity.

Is there not a small, hidden portal through which many such unfortunate mortals, who have wandered far from the straight path, can finally win admission to heaven? When they are summoned hence, they themselves know nothing of this hidden door through which they may catch a hurried glimpse of the wonders of heaven. And they may enter. Blinded by the reflection of the eternal light, and enchanted by the hymns of the angel-choirs, they may perhaps stand and look and ask: "I, too, am admitted, I who have never thought of heaven during my life?" Softly comes the whisper from the angel who had admitted them: "*Pax hominibus bonae voluntatis*" (Peace to men of good will).

Very often the Divine Mercy, which penetrates the hard shell of our souls to their inmost depth, will find good will buried under great ignorance or stupidity. Perhaps it was so with Pampalioto and his companions. This possi-

bility is a consoling thought, although it is only a possibility. The dreadful alternative awakens our dismay. However, this possibility (be it well-grounded or not) affords the only hopeful outlook for over a thousand million non-Christians. Will these find the little portal? Would it not be far better for us to direct them along the straight, steep path which leads up to the gate of heaven rather than to make their fate dependent on this dubious possibility? Perhaps they will fail to find the little portal, and then how awful will be their lot!

V. SOUL COMBATS

O ORIENS, splendor lucis aeternae, et sol justitiae! veni et illumina sedentes in tenebris et umbra mortis.

“O Dawn, thou Splendor of the Eternal Light and Sun of Justice, come and enlighten those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.”

Again rings the Advent Bell, and the Advent choir unites in prayer with those who languish in the darkness of error and the death-shadow of sin. Or rather, its intercession and prayers rise up for them to the Father of Eternal Light.

Only feeble, thin rays of light penetrate down from the clear heavens into the ugly pits in whose dark passages the pagan souls are buried. And, if you seek to explore the dark depths with the flame of a single match, the flickering rays of

light, which lead to the light of heaven, are immediately lost to view. In this same manner the light which penetrates pagan souls is extinguished when they blindly seek their sole guidance in the poor intelligence with which nature has gifted them. The flickering rays of this light issue indeed from the Eternal Light, but the mountains raised by sin hold the soul enclosed in a frightful cave, into which neither the breath nor light of life can reach. The revelation to our first parents left an opening through which Eternal Light might enter men's souls; but, as the path of human history lengthens, this shaft grows even narrower, and only a pale flicker now struggles feebly through. This flicker consists in the belief in a life beyond the grave, which persists throughout pagandom, even though the consciousness of it is not mentioned by the pagan philosophers, or is even ignored in practical life. There is an undefined something in them—the pagan does not know what exactly to think of it—that will survive. They think of their ancestors. These are dead, but not completely annihilated, not utterly destroyed. Their feelings and whole nature revolt at such a thought. But where, then, are they? A strange darkness enshrouds this question for them—the same darkness as that from which the soul seeks an outlet with the dim light of unaided reason, and seeks it in vain.

A mysterious charm, as well as a sad melancholy, lies like a veil over the statues of Buddha

which decorate the altars in the innumerable temples and shrines of the East. Persons who cannot appreciate the touching pity of it all may easily allow themselves to be misled by the charm which these statues exhale. Nor am I surprised that the favorable and artistic setting in which Buddhism is so often pictured inspires at first a certain reverence for Buddha, and finally erects a golden throne for his worship in hearts in which faith has waned, and which no longer treasure the image of the true Maker of us all. This change does not arise from inner conviction, but owes its origin to a certain deep-rooted need of the soul (which refuses to be without a religion), and to the satisfaction of having oneself erected a shrine which accords so well with one's taste and feelings. All that a good mother has sown with tender love, and childish innocence and faithful youth protected and nurtured, is cast aside as rubbish. And now another shrine parades itself before our eyes—a more beautiful one, as it seems to our mistaken notions, because it appeals more strongly to our senses; a religion without obligations, a morality without a god, who will defend its laws and judge us according to our observance of them.

Fashioned of richly gilt wood, Buddha sits on his lotus blossoms. Not alone is his aspect soothing to the æsthetic side of our nature, but he even obtrudes himself on our religious emotions. What a comfortable atmosphere surrounds the whole

figure! What a calm, solemn expression on his countenance, reflected, as it might seem, from a touching melancholy within! With drawn up feet, he is buried in deep contemplation. One hand is raised in impressive exhortation, like that of a teacher, with the thumb resting gracefully against the ring-finger. The glass symbol of caste shines in his forehead like a fiery eye.

As a token of esteem, a native acquaintance presented me with such a statue of Buddha—a statue containing bonze or buddha souls. My curiosity was as great as my pleasure when the Cor-ean presented the statue with the assurance that the souls were really enclosed within. The souls were those of bonzes who, by imitating Buddha, had become buddhas themselves! That the souls were actually in the statue, was an undeniable fact, for such was the testimony of the bonzes who, on the dissolution of their monastery, had been the channel through which the statue had been transferred to private possession and private worship. They themselves had placed in the statue the last of those souls which had spent their lives in union with Buddha—the glowing white soul of the last High Bonze.

I carefully opened the base of the statue, withdrawing the slide which covered the hollow interior. I first withdrew a faded document, wrapped in paper, and found that it testified to the authenticity of the souls. I proceeded carefully with my unpacking, and finally extracted the dif-

ferent "souls"—small pieces of wood or strangely shaped stones of various, striking colors. Finally, I came to the soul of the High Bonze, wrapped in a special piece of paper. Anxiously I continued my investigation, and eventually saw lying on the paper before me—a small, dull pearl. Disappointed, I rolled up all the contents again, replaced them in the statue, and closed the slide which was henceforth to shut off the mystery from view.

Had not the comparison immediately struck me as so unspeakably dreary, and this crude and discordant conception of the human soul driven every happy thought from my mind, I might have named the human soul as indeed a pearl surpassing in preciousness all the gems that the sea contains—a pearl which appears in its full splendor above in heaven, where it reflects the Divine glory; a pearl so precious that the Son of God shed His Blood to redeem it.

Such a jewel is indeed the human soul. But that other pearl was only a new evidence of the many millions of pagans who have no conception of the true worth of the human soul, have no correct knowledge of it, and in consequence neither properly prize it nor carefully preserve its dignity. And yet they all have within them an immortal soul as their one, most precious treasure. How exceedingly sad if they should lose it forever!

But perhaps you may think that a soul which knows so little of itself and esteems itself so lowly, must be also little acquainted with the toils of sin, must have no spiritual combats to wage, and must be free from the storms which submerge your own soul. Ever before your eyes the commandments of the law are suspended as the unbending will of God, of which your soul has so clear and precise a conception. To your soul the Divine Will communicates unceasingly its clear commands: "Thou shalt....thou must. This shalt thou not do. This is not allowed to thee." Despondent and craven hearts, troubled and embittered by such thoughts, may feel tempted to say: "How happy must be the pagan soul, which feels none of our scruples!" Such cowardly thoughts make one disgusted with one's lot, and inevitably plunge one in unhappiness and ingratitude. "How happy are the pagans," gently whispers the shameful temptation, "who are freed from the heavy yoke of duty, guilt and grief." Surely we should not seek peace—peace of the soul—in the depths of the ocean, for it is not there. Peace comes only to him who, summoning all his energy to the task, shall struggle through the waves to the safe haven of eternity.

Even to the heathen peace comes in no other way. The Apostle explains to you your own longing for happiness and peace: the pagans, who know not the law, are a law to themselves. They bear the natural law—the voice of conscience—

in their souls. It is this voice which explains to them the difference between right and wrong. This voice also declares to them in peremptory tones: "This is thy duty. This shalt thou do. This is evil and forbidden."

Perhaps you may ask: "But supposing that they act according to their conscience, will they be also judged accordingly?" Undoubtedly so, and if they are guided by their conscience in all their actions, never fall into error, or allow their conscience to lead them from the false path of error to the straight path of duty, then indeed they are journeying towards the light. They are struggling valiantly to emerge from the darkness, and will one day enjoy the eternal Light of God. This struggle constitutes their oppression of soul, just as it constitutes ours. For have not we also a conscience, by which alone we must direct our actions? It is our conscience alone which represents to us our obligations, which constantly directs our thoughts to the joyful faith of our golden childhood before our spiritual struggles had become so severe. We have now grown older, and should give proof of the strength and greatness of our souls.

"But," someone may say, "if pagan and Christian alike need only follow the dictates of conscience, all difference between the spiritual lives which they actually lead disappears." This is true as long as the pagan follows the dictates of his conscience. It is, however, almost impos-

sible to comprehend how difficult is the task which confronts him. How unsafe it is to endeavor to grope one's way through the dark! We must not forget how unspeakably difficult it is for a pagan youth, who is just attaining puberty and around whom roar the siren calls of vice, to hear and heed the warning cry which terrified conscience gives, for it is the call of the wretched man who has fallen among murderers. Instant terror forces it out, but the burning commands of awakened passion succeed it, and its last weak note dies unheeded. Conscience, whose summons was at first loud and clear and which later pleaded timidly for a hearing, very soon is stilled in the young pagan's breast, and finally dies. The first step towards sin has been taken, and the second follows quickly. In pagan surroundings, the child is nurtured without the least protection for his soul. He is thus immediately submerged in the whirlpool of sensuality and sin. The path to the light is obscured from his view, and his conscience lies dead in its grave.

How much more kindly has Providence dealt with us! We walk in the light, and, even if we wished to shout down the voice of our conscience, the call of grace rises above even the demands of unfettered passion. Grace looks down on us from every cross along the wayside, sounding an urgent exhortation in which mercy and goodness are intermingled. Every temporal cross which we have to carry is accompanied by grace. Grace speaks

to our hearts from every Christian pulpit wherein God's goodness and mercy are preached. It reaches our ears from the lips of the pious persons who participate in public processions. The Advent Bells proclaim it abroad to the whole world, and send the message to our hearts. Once upon a time these bells rang out loudly and solemnly and joyfully over the frozen ground, when they announced the birth of our Infant Savior. How gloriously they then sounded! This was, however, in the distant days of childhood, when the joyful notes awakened a blessed echo in our peaceful hearts. Why is the peace of childhood departed? Can we not summon it back? Let us listen to the Advent Bells, and discover it again in their gracious notes.

"But the downfall of a soul which has seen the light of truth must therefore be much more guilty than the error of those who have never learned the truth."

Ingratitude, blindness, and spiritual suicide are undoubtedly the most dreary lot of all. Yet a soul that has wandered into the night of sin finds its way out more easily, because the light of grace surrounds it and confronts it on all sides. We can kneel down humbly in the confessional, be relieved of the contagion of sin, and return with new courage to the fight, which never relaxes as long as life courses in our veins.

But who will heal the wounds in pagan souls? Pagandom has no physician who understands the

art of restoring to life the death-stricken soul, for what can their magicians do when with their hocuspocus, their magical formulas and their mysterious potions, they can bring no relief even to the sick body?

If the struggle be so exceedingly difficult for us—how unspeakably more difficult it must be for a pagan, who has no divine sacramental graces to enlighten, strengthen, and console him!

The sick, as a rule, have compassion for other unfortunate invalids. There are people sicker and poorer than we—sick of soul and grace-impooverished. No one displays the loving charity in caring for and healing their souls, with which our souls are treated when sin and misery assail them.

The Divine Samaritan has lovingly stooped down to bind our wounds, and nurtures us from day to day. Are we not strong and virile enough to co-operate in this work of charity and mercy for others of our fellowmen?

VI. THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD

It is an extraordinary fact that mankind has allowed barriers to be erected all over the globe, effectually separating race from race and people from people. Does this phenomenon cause us any concern? Or do we interpret it as an Advent longing—a clear peal of the Advent Bells in which God's mercy would ring again in lands re-

opened to brotherly intercourse? The Wall of China, behind which millions of heathen were shut off from intercourse with the outer world, is daily crumbling; Corea, which once issued an edict of death against all strangers who entered its territory, has abrogated this sinister ordinance. Japan is in quest of a new religion which it can recommend to its people. Shall not Christianity enter the ring to compete for the spiritual acquisition of these peoples? Intrepid explorers have penetrated into the deepest recesses of the primeval forests of Africa, careless of the dangers threatening them. Not even the grim aspect of the cannibals, who had filled the lonely islands of the South Sea with murders and horrors, could deter the adventurous spirit of these explorers. In every instance, Christian missionaries preceded these explorers or followed immediately in their wake.

In so far as commercial intercourse and a common outlook are concerned, the peoples of the earth are closer together than ever before. But is their attitude towards one another any more friendly for this reason? The answer to this question must grieve every Christian heart. For ourselves, but in all sincerity, we pray: "From plague, famine, and war, deliver us, O Lord;" but we immediately strive to banish from our thoughts the recollection of all the hideous injustice whose relief would claim our material co-operation if we recognized our kinship with pre-

viously estranged and miserable races, and undertook the opening up of hitherto closed lands.

Of what advantage is it for walls and barriers to be leveled if Christian love finds no entry? If mankind is to become one again, the bonds of charity must bind all races together. All who admit this fact must accept the obligation of nourishing the fire of charity in their own hearts, so that its spread may enkindle a like fire in their neighbors, which will in turn extend throughout the world wherever a human heart beats. All alike are predestined to love.

This clear, strong key-note must be grasped by us. A purely earthly love, born of a confused humanitarian feeling, is of no avail, nor is a mere sentimental affection, which confines itself to beautiful phrases about our suffering brothers and sisters, but stops short at deeds. Nothing is of any value for this purpose except an enlightened and determined charity which seeks and finds its strength in God, the source of all love.

God is love. He breathes the breath of life into the inert clay, which is forthwith enkindled with the fire of love. But sin bursts the bond of charity, which unites man with God, and immediately the tender threads which hold men together in brotherly communion begin to fray.

The races of the world are interwoven like a gaily colored carpet. Thousands of years were needed for the weaving. Climatic conditions have set varying imprints on the races; local cus-

toms and modes of life have contributed distinguishing characteristics, but nobility of soul has, with kindly touch, toned the harsh colors, which might form too sharp a contrast between peoples. What stands most clearly out from the work, however, is the harsh pattern which sin has worked into the design.

The first sin of disobedience was very quickly followed by Cain's awful crime of murder, and soon the raging waters of sin had flooded the earth, enveloping all its inhabitants. The terrors of the Deluge were speedily forgotten by Noah's descendants. God separated, under the Tower of Babel, the tribes of haughty mankind, compelling each to go its own way, since it no longer understood the others' speech. Centuries and centuries pass by, and mankind again extends all over the earth, everywhere bearing the load of sin. Here we see the proud Romans encircling their heads with vine wreaths, stifling their heroic qualities in sensual riots. There you may see the Red Indians tearing the bloody scalp from the head of a fallen enemy, long before a White-face had set foot on their unknown shores. Almost without intermission the centuries have witnessed the dark deeds of sin. The cruelty of the white conquerors in America smote the hapless Redskins to the ground, and all Africa resounded with wailings during the slave hunts which desecrated its soil. Ever more restless flies the shuttle of history, weaving its dark woof of horror and in-

justice, until we reach the policy of oppressing and extirpating the Indians, in whose favor the Holy Father of all peoples issued an appeal from Rome to the conscience and honor of mankind.

The traditions of a people extend back to a distant dim past. But at the stages where mankind passed through critical periods in its descent, stand milestones which furnish elusive, but still unmistakable evidence of the unity of the human race.

The Babylonians have left behind cuneiform documents which testify to the unity of the human race. Researches into the Sanscrit language have furnished indirect evidence of the fact that the hand of God scattered mankind from the foundations of the Tower of Babel. Nor is it only among the civilized races of ancient days that accounts of the early history of mankind have been preserved. Even among the uncivilized tribes of every continent we find easily recognizable accounts of the origin of man and his early history. These accounts are indeed legendary, but contain unmistakable analogies with the story of our first parents and the awesome events which accompanied the dawn of humanity on this earth.

In the case of some people, the resemblances between their legends and Holy Writ are so striking that one is tempted to assign to them a close and comparatively late connection with the Jewish people despite the difference in the color of their skins.

In his report on the tribe of Masai, which at present occupies a territory in German East Africa to the south of the Equator, Captain Merker mentions most striking details, which often seem to be taken verbatim from the Bible. Incident after incident recurs, with occasional fantastic alterations—the creation of the universe, our first parents, the Garden of Paradise with its precious fruits and the forbidden tree, the first murder, the Deluge as a punishment of sin, with the wooden Ark, etc., even down to the Ten Commandments. Only one of the commandments indeed has been retained in precise terms: "There is only one God, of whom ye shall make no image." Another Commandment (the eighth of the Masai) is of deep moral import: "A man shall always have only one wife: not until she has died or been set aside, shall he marry a second." The other Commandments (with the exception, perhaps, of the tenth, which ordains sacrifice) have been subjected to arbitrary transformations, which relate merely to social and civil life, but are reminiscent of the civil ordinances for the Chosen People.

In American folklore, whether we study that of the Eskimos of the frozen North or that of the other tribes of this huge continent down to its southernmost point, we find everywhere stories of the early history of the human race, testifying to its unity.

Among the native tribes of Mexico, we meet legendary stories of the first days of man on this

globe: "God created a man and a woman out of the earth. Later men forgot their obligations and their origin, whereupon they were entirely exterminated by a universal deluge. One Indian priest alone, named Tezbi, took refuge with his wife and children in a large wooden trunk, taking also with him beasts of all kinds and different seeds. After the flood had abated, he released the bird 'Aura,' but it did not return. Other birds, which he later released, also failed to return. Only the smallest of the birds, the humming-bird, returned after some time with a branch in its beak." How else can we explain the manner in which these astonishing particulars found their way across the broad and unfathomable ocean except on the hypothesis that they were brought over by men who regarded these facts as part of their own history, and thus traced back their origin to Noah and the Ark, and thence to Adam and the Garden of Paradise?

Sin, like an iron wedge, has shattered the cement which held all peoples in unity. And God and love must be the fast brace which will knit them together again. A love which is deeply rooted in God can and must be the agency which will re-unite mankind. It was sin which tore the social strata asunder. There still abides in the breast of man a measure of love, albeit a measure insufficient to make us appreciate our neighbors' trials and sorrows and to inspire us to the magnanimity of an active charity. This mag-

nanimity does not consist merely in accepting the sacrifices which mother-love, filial love, and love of country regularly place upon us, inciting us to care for an invalid child or aging parent or to die for our country. Deep and heavy shadows often obscure the joyful features which might otherwise prove attractive in pagandom.

It is not often possible to behold the beautiful scene which I witnessed at our mission station of Nyangao. A negro child, which had fallen into a painful and lingering illness, was brought to the mission by its pagan mother, who asked the Sisters to give it some medicine to restore its health. The nursing Sister informed the mother that the child must be left in her care, as it would need medicine frequently during the day. If the child were not left in the hospital, it would not have long to live. The woman was unwilling to be separated from her child, and summoned her mother-love to her aid. Refusing to be separated from her child, and yet determined that it should have the care of the Sisters, she built a little hut near the Mission Station, and lived here with her child until it was cured.

Even though very frequently the silent sacrifice of maternal love and the fresh joy of a child's love for its mother are degraded by brutish outbreaks, pagandom knows this love, which is the most glorious blossom it has rescued from Paradise. And yet, uprooted from the soil in which the God of heaven planted it and transferred to

the thorny field of pagandom, it must lose its splendor and aroma, as well as the vigor necessary to bear its proper fruit. However holy and divine it was in the beginning, it must become earthly and merely emotional. It must wither and end abruptly when the needs and woes of strangers are concerned.

It was the Divine Heart of Our Divine Savior—a Heart so overflowing with an all-embracing love that it burst the narrow bonds of earthly affections—that declared: “For if you love them that love you, what reward shall you have? Do not even the publicans this? And if you salute your brethren only, what do you more? Do not also the heathen this?” (Matt., v, 46—47). Such is His challenge to mankind.

Have you heeded this challenge of your Savior? for to you also this challenge is directed. Or do you wish to enquire like the lawyer in the Gospel of St. Luke (x, 29): “And who is my neighbor?” Our Divine Savior would repeat to you the parable of the Good Samaritan, although perhaps He might ask you: “Why question Me incessantly? Have I not already spoken with sufficient clearness? Or would you have understood better the love of which I speak, and practiced it more gladly and easily, if I had described it as the ‘love of strangers,’ instead of ‘the love of one’s neighbor?’ Let us, then, call it the ‘love of strangers,’ for this also was included in My injunction. The Eskimo child, which whimpers in

the northern climes, and the expiring Australasian negro, whose fading eyesight questions eternity, have a claim on your love."

Why will you not grasp the full import of Christ's message on the love of our neighbor? Are we not all children of one Father who is in heaven? Or do you think that the Savior of the World came on earth only for you and to conduct you and yours along the path to heaven; that the saving efficacy of His Blood would not suffice for you if it had also to bring heavenly blessings and grace to the millions of pagans on this globe?

There are of course racial differences. But does not nature also endow the children of any large family with different gifts and different qualities? One son may bury himself in books, while another prefers a more active occupation. The pious, retiring disposition of one daughter inclines her to a seclusion which will eventually lead her to the cloister, while her sister is so fickle in school that she is evidently destined to belong to the giddy-minded section of society. One of the children may find such difficulty in keeping pace with his studies that he is doomed to fall to the rear in the later struggles of life. The case is not different with the great family of races, and here also they can form a narrow circle around their Father's table. Not infrequently one of those who had previously been left behind in the race suddenly becomes aroused, outstrips all the others, and his performances are a reproof

of their pretensions. Has not this been the case with the peoples of Northern Europe? When St. John Chrysostom proposed to the cultivated Greeks to build a church for the Goths, their vain pride of race made them answer: "These blond beasts are not sufficiently civilized to appreciate the value of a church." Yet this occasion may be regarded as the birthday of the Church in Northern Europe. And, now that we have attained an advanced culture, shall we imitate the Greeks of old in despising those people who stand on a lower rung of the ladder of civilization? It is only with eyes of kindly charity and loving mercy that true humanity can look down on our uncivilized brethren.

We should be aware of allowing our pride of race to fall within the scope of Schopenhauer's definition: "Of all the varieties of pride, national pride is the most stupid, since all that it requires of us is to be born." Yet this pride has its justification, when it signifies an earnest self-respect and deep sense of personal dignity which will actively impel us to preserve and increase what we have inherited from our forbears—the spirit of our fathers, which made them great, their holy religion and their pure, sturdy morality. In our battle with the opposing currents, which would sweep away the highest and most beautiful of our ideals and would submerge true spiritual grandeur in the swift channels of a material conception of the universe, such an ennobled national

pride as the above will become ever more firmly convinced that we are bound to transmit to others what we ourselves have inherited. The pagan nations and the peoples who are lowest in the scale of civilization are an obligation for us, the preferred races, who, under the shadow of Christianity, have grown rich in spiritual goods, have advanced in civilization, and are nourished at the richly laden tables of God's grace. In the New Testament we read the following injunction of Our Savior: "Gratis accepistis, gratis date." "Freely have you received, freely give."

From racial suspicion to racial hatred is only a short step. Consequently, we need not be astonished that so many have taken this step, that human dignity has been so often outraged, and that the "savage" is so commonly regarded as only a species of higher animal which we are to use until he is worn out. Speak to one of the "supermen," who hold such views of uncivilized peoples, about the soul which a negro carries within him, and which it is the duty of every Christian colonial power to take into account, and he will have only a sympathetic smile for your sentimental folly. In such a man's opinion the negro possesses no soul, and the only language understood by the "savage" is that of the whip which is used on the oxen drawing the prairie-wagon.

Our Divine Savior has sketched out for us a program which does not forbid but adjusts racial distinctions—a simple, clear program of brotherly love.

But why, you may ask, should love of a race be discountenanced? Is this not equivalent to discouraging a love which is the first step towards a merciful and helpful attitude towards strangers? We ask in reply: Is it right that we should speak of "strangers," when they are our brethren who solicit our assistance? Do you not hear the lament of the Advent Bells, as they voice the heart-rending supplication of pagandom to Our Savior in heaven: *O rex gentium et desideratus earum lapisque angularis, qui facis utraque unum: veni et salva hominem quem de limo formasti.*—"O King of the Gentiles, the desired of the peoples, thou cornerstone who holdest both together: come and save mankind whom thou hast formed out of the slime of the earth."

Around the Tower of Babel mankind was thrown into despair; in the mighty edifice of the Church all races are to be reunited. The redeeming love of Our Savior longs to bind them all together so that all these peoples who have been formed by the creative hand of the same kind Father shall become one again. The Divine Architect appeals also to your love. With no less enthusiasm than on that former occasion when mankind, impelled by pride, collected the stones for the Tower of Babel, should we prepare the stones from which a church is to be erected that will indeed reach the clouds. This new edifice is to be built of living stones—men's souls. Thus will the building extend and grow higher. All the scattered

peoples must be collected, and brought back to their beauteous home which scales the heavens. Instead of the curse of God, which overturned the Tower of Babel, the hand of Our Savior is laid in benediction upon this building, pouring over it the Divine blessings, the pledge of eternity and heavenly beatitude.

Will you not co-operate in this work? In his oppressive anguish of soul, we can teach the pagan the sweet name of Our Heavenly Father, and tell him of the divine kindness and gracious mercy. His fear of a blind fate must then yield to a blessed trust in a kind Providence. It is in our power to banish his wild terror at the anger of his idols by the sign of that Cross on which a God died out of love for mankind. The fitful, uncertain eyes of the dying, which look towards an eternal night like the tired eye of the blind, will open again to gaze at an eternal sea of light and to look longingly for the joyful splendor of heaven.

Externally, the burden of life will be scarcely altered, but a new sentiment of consecrated devotion will be superimposed which has received its splendid enlightenment from eternity and will work deeds of eternal value. Like the spring sunshine, which succeeds the long, dark winter, love will smile on us and will pour its soft light into our lives. Under the mild rays of this sun, selfishness will disappear, and will be succeeded by a warmth of heart which will embrace all peoples.

Instead of the empty deceit of magic, with which the pagan priesthood and magicians deceive their foolish followers, the truth will shine out on all altars. Reverential ceremonies will carry a message to our hearts; moving solemnities will offer a tribute to this truth and the one, true God. Heretofore, chaff had to suffice as the sole food for these souls. Henceforth, the Bread of Heaven will support them on their life's journey, and the strength of the Sacraments will be their armor in all spiritual conflicts.

Amid the trials of life, when one's soul is severely tested, a previously unknown voice now rings out: "Persevere and fight, for salvation is near." Salvation and an everlasting crown of victory are the reward for our fidelity during the short combat of life. The soul has found what it has sought and longed for. "Peace, peace," is the greeting which one soul offers to another. "Requiescat in pace" (Rest in peace), such are the words which, as an expression of their own hopes, the friends of a departed soul inscribe on the wooden cross which watches over the grave. In these three words are expressed their prayer that the departed may find everlasting peace. Is it not great happiness to cause such happiness, a great pleasure to prepare such pleasure, a great blessing to be the instrument that brings this blessing to our brethren?

VII. QUIS UT DEUS?

What a fearful picture of war is drawn in the Apocalypse: "And there was a great battle in heaven, Michael and his angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels. And they prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven. And that great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, who seduceth the whole world; and he was cast unto the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him" (Apoc., xii, 7-9). We seem to hear the loud cry of battle ring through these passages, thundering through the immeasurable expanses of heaven: "Who is as God?" Such is the rallying call of all those angels who assist Michael in the fight in honor of the Most High. And then all is silent. Pillars of smoke and sheaves of fire devour the rebellious spirits. They are set ablaze, like bonfires celebrating the victory of the One, All-holy God, and through the solemn silence peals the joyful paeon to the Eternal Lord: "Quis ut Deus?"

Above in heaven the fight has long since ended, but here on earth it still rages with varying fortune. Driven from heaven, Lucifer has transferred his fearful warfare to this earth, and has tossed the torch of battle into men's souls. He has, alas! found it easy to incite the children of God against their Heavenly Father,

and he fans the world to a hateful zeal. We see the children of men, in whom reason has just begun to kindle the light of God, go over in hosts to the camp of the Prince of Darkness. Their whole lives they stand in serried ranks opposing the advance of the light which came into this world to enlighten it and to brighten the path to the Light Eternal.

For the most part they are conscious neither of the sad cause which they have espoused, nor of the outcome that necessarily awaits them. But sooner or later their own fate will be involved in this outcome. "They will be like to those in whom they have reposed their confidence, by whom they have allowed themselves to be seduced into the warfare against heaven and God."

The Kingdom of Darkness, in which Lucifer, the bright star, is himself submerged, is the cause for which they contend. Eternal darkness with its unfathomable woes, groans and tortures, is the final and never-ending act of the drama in which they are engaged, unless they again bow down in humble submission before their offended Creator—even if only a moment before their feverish and heated souls are summoned to answer for their acts before the judgment-seat of the Almighty.

Even supposing that they have only combated the truth out of ignorance, and that a deep confusion of mind was responsible for their

refusing to render due honor to the One, unknown God and for their transferring their homage to the Spirit of Darkness—is not even this unconscious estrangement from God and this fostering of hatred of Him the most sad and frightful fate that can overtake a man on his life's journey? How lowly is such a man's estate in the midst of created things over which he should reign as lord and master, as a crowned ruler governs his subjects, who look up to him in reverence! But this "king" serves for the pitiable wage which the Prince of Darkness casts him.

Empty, vile sensual pleasures are what Islam promises—pleasures in which all strength and beauty of soul are obscured like sunbeams vainly struggling to pierce the fogs which settle over dank morasses. It promises to give these pleasures, with their sensual glitter, for all eternity. What an attractive prospect an eternity given over to such excesses holds! "Allah! Allah!" is the battle-cry of the Mohammedan natives of Africa, therein voicing their hostility to Christianity. Once they have ranged themselves under the banner of the Prophet, repeating a few cheap sentences from the Koran and submitting to circumcision, they make it their boast to hate Christianity and to treat all Christians as unbelievers. A strong fortress, very difficult to attack, is thus created in the middle of heathendom, which had once shown

itself so kindly disposed to the love-suit of Christ. Will the onslaught of the Cross succeed in reducing this high bulwark of Islam? Many feel compelled to answer in the negative. The victory in any case will not be an easy one. Only the enrolment of hosts of warriors, who will fight valiantly for the victory of truth, can stay the triumphant march of error. Only where the Cross is planted, will the might of hell recoil.

Elsewhere we can see another picture of the battle which is being waged—a picture instinct with unusual and variegated colors. A Chinese family is returning home from the funeral mound, under which the father has been laid for his everlasting rest. On reaching the dwelling, in which the father ruled with so much circumspection, the whole family goes on its knees before a wooden tablet painted with Chinese characters. Having deposited their sacrificial gift, they begin their prayers—not for but to the deceased, as the guardian spirit of the family. To him, as to a divine being, they offer their sacrifice, for henceforth his soul dwells within the tablet, helping and protecting the family with the power of a god. The wretched people do not recognize the hollow mockery of their blind superstition, which the Evil One utilizes to hold them in his spell. They regard this custom as a proof of their filial esteem for their parents. By this deception, the

Spirit of Deceit succeeds in having sacrifice offered to him, and receives the homage which belongs to God alone. Only with difficulty can the Cross and its truth succeed in breaking the chains which seem to unite parents and children in this intimate manner, but which really separate both still further from their one Father in heaven. This religious outlook of the Chinese is a granite wall far more difficult to surmount than the ancient wall behind which the people were for so long shut off from the outside world, and in this spiritual fortress the arch-enemy of God still rallies his hosts for his destructive onsets.

Another scene instinct with the spirit of battle may be seen in Japan. Having acquired the leading position among the huge empires of the Far East during the last few decades, Japan determined lately to hold a review of all the religious forces which might be utilized for the raising of the scale of morality and the strengthening of the nation. Shintoism, the ancient faith of the people, and Buddhism have offered their assistance, and expect to become rejuvenated in the minds of the nation. American Protestantism also desires to assist in the great cause of fostering the spiritual and moral elevation of the aspiring people, thus introducing at least some of the light of the Cross. Why is the standard of the Catholic Church so inconspicuous amidst the bonzes and the Anglican

bishops who throng to the brilliant assemblies at which the Japanese Government consults with the representatives of the different religions concerning the welfare of the people and the future of the nation? Why is the voice of truth silent? Perhaps it finds too little sympathetic a hearing from the thoroughly material-minded Japanese. Perhaps the martyrs' blood which was shed in such abundance is a silent reproach to the Japanese Government, imposing on it a timid restraint.

The most deep-rooted reason, however, is that national spirit which every Japanese feels, and which must find expression in a Japanese national church. The whole situation is well described in a work on the Customs of Japan, written in French: "Christianity would perhaps be more easily extended if it established a Japanese Church, which, freed from all external influence, would pay complete heed to the dictates of the Mikado, thus permitting constant developments to take place, as the exigencies of the time might demand, just as is the case in certain countries of Europe" (I. Hitomi, "Le Japon," Tokio, 1901). The Catholic Church is, therefore, maligned in Japan as hostile to the public interest, and it is inculcated even in the school children that a Catholic cannot be a good Japanese. How well they have adopted a catch-cry which is so frequently heard even in Europe! A serious, bitter battle lies ahead of the advancing Cross, if the latter is not to be overthrown.

Ardet pugna ferox; Lucifer ipse, vide,
Horrida monstra furens ex Acheronte vomit.
Ocius, alma Parens, ocius affer opem!
Tu mihi virtutem, robur et adde novum,
Contere virgineo monstra inimico pede!
Te duce, Virgo, libens aspera bella geram,
Diffugiunt hostes; te duce victor ero.*

Such was the loving petition of Pope Leo XIII, and we join in his prayer and share his confidence that Mary will help us in our trials.

To-day indeed the Advent Bell rang out like the thunder of battle as if to announce that our prayers to Mary were heard. In her Son she gives us the only-begotten Son of God. "Emmanuel, our God, is with us!" What a battle-cry for us, what a paeon of victory! With our God, and in His army, let us join the fight in honor of Our Heavenly Father; let us advance to the victory for the Kingdom of Christ.

O Emmanuel, rex et legifer noster, expectatio gentium et salvator earum: veni ad salvandum nos, Domine Deus noster. "O Emmanuel, our King and legislator, the expectation and savior of the Gentiles: come Thou and save us, our Lord and our God."

* "Fiercely the battle rages. Lo! Lucifer himself hurls forth his monstrous hosts from Acheron's pit. More quickly, gracious Mother, more quickly lend thy aid; grant me courage for the fight, and strength renewed. With thy virginal foot crush the serpent in the dust. Under thy banner I shall gladly wage the bitter fight. With thee my leader, the enemy will be scattered, and I shall emerge victorious."

God Himself comes to save His people.

Who can speak of the services demanded, when a king summons his people into his armies and leads in person his hosts into the fight? Love of country, inspired patriotism and heroic valor, it is true, make our hearts swell and our eyes flash on such occasions. But amidst the din of battle a voice rises higher than the warm pulsations of love, the holy oath of fidelity or the fiery bidding of patriotic enthusiasm. This is the firm and grave voice of duty.

An ardent love should inflame Christian hearts, and incite them to missionary enthusiasm. Ideally gifted natures may be developed for the heroic life of the missionary. Gratitude is triumphant when it provides collaborators in Christ's work of bringing salvation to man. Yet, when the King of kings, the Lord of heaven and earth, summons His people to battle, the consciousness of our duty should be our chief reason for gladly obeying the call. The love of God for men, the paternal claims which the Creator has on all His created children, the magnanimity of Christ's death for mankind on the Cross—do not all these constitute the basis for a claim on His creatures? We who acknowledge our relations to God, have enrolled ourselves in the retinue of Our Savior, and have partaken of the fruits of His redemption, are bound to co-operate in the cultivation of the broad missionary fields so that salvation will be brought to all our brethren.

God's claims on mankind and God's interests are unparalleled. God has created man for heaven. He has predestined us for eternity. That all shall eventually reach their Father's home, is the divine will.

This interest of Our Heavenly Father should be the first object of our strivings. One great and holy law rules over all creation: "God wills it." From one end of the universe to the other, not an atom moves but as God has ordained. All those fiery worlds, which sweep through the infinite spaces of the universe, obey His laws and follow the paths which He has ordained. He, their Lord and Creator, has called them into existence by His omnipotent word, and obedient to this word, they beam joyfully through the lightless depths of the universe.

"God wills it!" This phrase should find an echo in our souls. And what does God will? God wills your salvation. Every man without exception—from Adam's days to the last terrible day which marks the beginning of eternity—has no other destiny than to return home to His Father in heaven. Such is the divine will. God wills man's eternal salvation, a happiness for man that is incomprehensible on earth. It is His will that every human soul must be considered of priceless worth. Not only should we make it a matter of honor to work for the fulfilment of God's will in all things, but our life and whole being should count for absolutely nothing when God's will is

placed in the other scale. Our duty is peremptory in such a case. "God wills it"—that should be sufficient for us.

Lost in wonder, the Psalmist looks up at the brilliant constellations which, set in the firmament above, do glory to God unceasingly night and day. The heavens proclaim the glory of God. He then lowers his eyes, and is confounded. "What will happen if man does not attain to Thee, O God, his eternal aim?" His perplexed comment is: "Who will praise Thee in hell, O God?" God's glory is the highest ideal which man can pursue on earth. If we meditate on this fact, we cannot evade the obligations which its acceptance entails.

The Cross preaches a new duty, for it typifies the fulfilment of the Advent hopes of mankind. Our Savior's words on the Cross were a pæan of victory, which resounded throughout the entire world: "It is consummated."

"Is it true," we ask as we survey the world around us, "is it true that the work of salvation is consummated? Our Savior's call has not yet reached the remote habitations of men, nor penetrated into the closed chambers of millions of hearts."

Yes, it is true, for Our Savior has completed His work for the salvation of mankind. Let us look up at the Cross, and consider whether more were possible for Him to do. Not one drop of blood remains in His heart; the final gasp, which an extreme effort has wrung from His breast, has

pressed from His sacred wounds the last precious pearl of His saving Blood, which for three long hours has streamed to the earth.

Behold our Emmanuel! God, in very truth, is with us. He is silent now, for death has closed His lips. But His whole being — His outstretched hands, His pierced feet, the gasping wound through which we can see to His very Heart—demands of us: “My people, what more could I have done, and have not done?”

His work is consummated, but it is not yet finished. The sacrifice of His life and death must be continued and made unceasingly efficacious since He cannot be indifferent whether His aim of saving the whole world is fulfilled or not. Consequently, He cannot be indifferent to the attitude we assume towards the practical promotion of the work of bringing salvation to all peoples.

With heartfelt eagerness and an earnest recollection, let us place ourselves beneath the Cross, and thence direct our eyes towards the battlefield of the world. Perhaps the idea will then dawn upon us that the magnanimous spirit of sacrifice, revealed on the Cross above us, not merely asks for some corresponding sacrifice from us Christians, but actually demands it. Wherefore, in naming ourselves Christians, do we take His name, if we draw no inspiration from His life? The life of Christ belongs to the whole world and to the souls of all men without exception, for there on the Cross He laid down His life for all.

Jesus knew the difficulty which would beset His work until men's hearts could rise to His lofty conception of universal salvation, until His example inspired them to pass beyond the narrow circle of their individual temporal trials and the oppressing needs of their immediate surroundings, until they would finally understand the all-embracing love of His Sacred Heart. He therefore prayed for this understanding for His disciples. To His apostles and disciples indeed He issues His command in unequivocal terms. They cannot grumble; they may not confine themselves to Jewish territory, thereby restricting their activities to their own people. What then of the numberless Christians who believe in the Savior, thanks to the preaching of these same disciples? Are not they bound to co-operate in the fulfilment of the last will of their dying Savior? "Ut sint omnes unum" (That they all shall be one), such was His prayer in His last hour. His last testament proceeds: "And for them do I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. And not for them only do I pray, but for them also, who through their word shall believe in Me, that they all shall be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in us that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." If we are to be one in God, one in Christ, the Redeemer of the World, His divine will must operate in us just as the will of the Heavenly Father operated in God the Son. Consequently, we may not rest until we can say with upright

hearts: "It is consummated. I also have striven my utmost that all shall be found and saved whom Thou hast sought, and for whom Thou, my Savior, hast died."

We should never forget that an eternal value attaches to immortal souls, that souls are as precious as eternity itself, that souls have been redeemed by the precious Blood of the Son of God. These souls belong to Him. Has He not the right, therefore, to ask us to help Him to acquire His own? He has purchased us also at the same high price which He has paid for the other souls. That price was inscribed in bloody figures on the tree of the Cross, and is imprinted on our foreheads with the first sign of the Cross which we receive in Baptism.

Many a great man has taken with him to his grave an ideal plan on the elaboration of which he has spent his whole life. At first sight it might also seem as if Our Savior, with His all-embracing plans of salvation, was doomed to the same fate. Twelve pillars, however, may be seen beside His grave; eleven totter indeed, and one is already fallen. On these pillars He intends to build His Church. This Church is to execute His plan of redemption and to receive all mankind within its walls. That is at once its task and its duty. "Go ye into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature," such was the inscription which Christ carved on the foundation-stone of His Church. The

fact that the Church has since grown, is a proof that the living strength communicated to it by its Founder has penetrated its entire framework. This constant external development is a consequence of our Savior's injunction: "Go ye into the whole world."

Into the very last leaf which hangs on the living tree of the Church the sap of life must penetrate. Of what does the Church consist? Is it an abstract term, or an idea compressed into a sentence in the catechism? Is it composed of all the stones which go to form the church edifices of the world? Our Savior has drawn the plans, and laid the foundations, constituting Himself the cornerstone. The work of continuing the edifice falls to our lot. All must co-operate in this work, some as directors, others as laborers or helpers. There should be no idle onlookers in the case of a work whose completion lies so close to the heart of the Divine Architect.

Everyone of us must assist to the best of his ability. If one person were allowed to leave his task to his neighbor, the work might come to a standstill. But where is the immediate responsibility for the execution of the divine will vested? If the Church had forgotten this task of hers, the glorious edifice, in which all peoples are to find salvation would have faded into a mere dream-picture long centuries ago, we ourselves would be still submerged in the darkness

of pagandom, and would be still stretching out our hands after some *fata morgana*—some high aspiration which Our Savior had bequeathed to the world, but into which neither life nor strength had been breathed. Only in so far as she adopted the world-embracing aims of Jesus Christ and labors to execute them, does Our Savior continue to live in the Church. Only in so far as she fulfills this mission, does the Church continue to play her proper rôle as the Church Universal and the savior of the world. And just as each one of us draws his life from the waters which in this Church pour out Our Savior's salvation and grace, each one of us is bound to assist the Church in her work of redemption.

Our Church is called the "Catholic" Church—a title which is both honorary and official. She receives this title because her Divine Founder has assigned her the task of bringing salvation to all the peoples of the world. In this gigantic task all the children of the Church must co-operate with enthusiasm.

The relations between mother and child are not regulated merely by love. Both parents and children have also obligations towards one another. Our Holy Mother, the Church, has always discharged her obligations to us with absolute fidelity, leaving us no cause for complaint in this particular. One of our duties toward her lies in our heartfelt sympathy with her aims,

when she reveals to us a heart full of anxiety for the souls of all men throughout the world. Hence arises an obligation which one child may not transfer to the shoulders of another. And, if it should happen that a child fails in this respect, might we not doubt whether such a child has a correct understanding of the dearest wish of its mother's heart? What would be the result if some children wished to refuse the work which others, through misunderstanding or scorn, had neglected? Such would result in the entire abandoning of the duty which was laid on the Church by God.

"Go ye into the whole world!" such was the commission which Our Savior gave to His Church. Those who accept this commission can have only one answer, namely, that which Peter once made when he was asked to cast his nets: "At Thy word!"

Yes, Lord, at Thy word. Other words Thou didst also speak—words of earnest warning: "He who is not with Me is against Me; he who gathereth not with Me, scattereth." While we hesitate with our hands lying idle on our laps and think whether we cannot resign to others the task of saving souls, unbelief and heresy enroll recruits, arm them, wage battle and claim the victory. Millions of human souls, destined to acquire a knowledge of truth, withdraw from the firing line, and are conducted before the eternal Commander of all. Shall they be

able to attribute to us the guilt because they have combated the truth on earth?

St. Bernard once journeyed through the land, preaching the Crusade for the recovery of the Holy Land: "God wills it, God wills it!" These words resounded in the assemblies of every land, and were re-echoed by the valiant hosts which set out to rescue the Holy Places from the hands of the unbelievers. But God wills still greater things. Every human soul is to Him an empire, a holy land. He wishes to rescue the whole world for heaven. Let us join in this campaign of the Cross! Those who cannot wield a sword in this spiritual warfare, can take their rosaries in their hand and pray for the active combatants in the strife. Those who cannot march forth to war, but remain in the safe ramparts of the homeland, should lend the most active co-operation possible and encourage the others with their loving care. God wills it!

Christmas Hymns

I. CHRISTMAS ON THE MISSION

HRISTMAS, the feast beloved of the children, has never ceased to be an occasion of deep joy for me. Do you wonder how Christmas is celebrated in the tropics where there are no frosted flowers to weave a mysterious curtain on the windows and conceal from the expectant eyes of the little ones the arrival of the Child Jesus and His gifts—where there is no snow to remind us of the cold of the stable in Bethlehem as we enter the church and hear the silvery harps begin the soft prelude of the joyful Midnight Mass. The burning sun, which reaches its zenith about this time south of the Equator, is gathering the dark storm-clouds, and flashing lightning heralds the beginning of the rainy season. In flaming characters, the hand of God writes this inscription on the silent walls of night: “Lumen ad revelationem gentium” (The light is come which shall illumine pagandom).

This glorious illumination of pagandom, which is progressing steadily in the tropics, was made manifest to me on Christmas Day of 1911. Far from home, with its snow-covered fields and

gaily decked Christmas trees, I celebrated the holy festival at our mission station of Peramiho in the interior of Africa, thirty days' journey from the coast.

What a clear conception the black Christians had of the mystery that was being celebrated! How anxious they were to receive their Savior also in the crib of their hearts! From early morn on Christmas Eve the confessionals were besieged. In the afternoon the children arrived in gay throngs, restraining their youthful enthusiasm with difficulty lest their loud jubilation should disturb the devout preparations for the glorious feast. A crowd of boys had brought from a great distance a large drum, which was to join in the celebration of the *Siku kuu* (the Great Day). For the present, however, it was concealed in the shadow of a big tree, since the boys had first to go to church and, by a good Confession, prepare themselves for the most glorious of festivals.

Meanwhile, the little cloister with its enclosed courtyard has donned the festive garb appropriate to this day of days. An altar is quickly erected before the door, framed by two palm-trees which grow on either side. Fond hopes are expressed that the weather will continue fine, since the church can scarcely hold half the faithful, and many pagans, who have heard of the joyful preparation for the feast, will also attend. Perhaps the Divine Grace will

take advantage of this occasion to slip quietly into these seeking hearts! On a small platform opposite the altar stands a Christmas tree gaily decorated. How strange it looks in these surroundings! And yet it is a suggestive picture of the Divine Child; it suggests the *Rex pacificus*, the Child of Peace, bringing His gifts. Palm-leaves have been attached to a little bushy tree, from which are strung gay ribbons and strange, golden fruits. The school Sisters are busily occupied, and are stringing green festoons along the platform which is to be the glorious stage for the Christmas play. The little black children are helping industriously in the erection of this stage on which in a few hours they are to appear as angels.

Thus, on one side of the court, the figurative representation of the mystery of Christmas is to be given, while on the altar opposite the *Rex pacificus* is to come down bringing all His blessings and His peace to the assembled faithful. The beautiful scene of Christ's birth will be re-enacted, and the glorious reality of His incarnation renewed. The bright glory of heaven's blessing will be shed over the poverty of the little cloister, as it shone formerly over the bleak stable in Bethlehem on the first Holy Christmas of all.

Night has lowered an expectant curtain. The little light on the Christmas tree is now burning, and the soft notes of a harmonium, like the

distant song of the angels, open the Christmas Play. The courtyard has been quickly filled with Christians, large and small. The children around the Crib sing the short verses of a hymn in celebration of the Nativity, and their fresh voices contain something so peaceful that we forget we are in the Dark Continent where, only a few years ago, fire and murder were applied to overwhelm the first seeds of Christianity in blood and ashes.¹

Black children kneel around the Crib, dressed as shepherds and angels. Their eyes shine, and their hearts beat with a deep understanding of the Savior's love—a love which is so readily understood by children's hearts. All the spectators listen devoutly and with deep emotion, while the full tones of the harmonium thrill every heart.

Well-known, beloved notes are these, reminiscent of my childhood and (thank God!) preserved in my later and more serious years together with my youthful joy in the Christmas celebrations. The melody is that of my distant home and my distant childhood, but the text! The text summarily recalls to my immediate surroundings my thoughts which would fain have wandered back to my parents' house. "Siku kuu, takatifu, Bethlehem usiku" (Holy Night, Peaceful Night), so proceed the voices around me in homely, affectionate fashion. The

¹ The station of Peramiho was destroyed in 1905.

candles on the Christmas-tree burn slowly as in my dear room at home, where they sent rays of rapture into childish eyes and of happiness into childish hearts.

Holy Night! Peaceful Night!
Thro' the darkness beams a light!
Yonder where they sweet vigils keep
O'er the Babe, who, in silent sleep,
Rests in heavenly peace!

Silent Night! Holiest Night!
Darkness flies and all is light!
Shepherds hear the angels sing:
Alleluia! hail the King!
Jesus the Savior is here!

Silent Night! Holiest Night!
Guiding Star, O lend thy light!
See the eastern wise men bring
Gifts and homage to our King!
Jesus the Savior is here!

This was the jubilant hymn in which the childlike hearts of young and old voiced all their happiness and gratitude, and expressed their unbounded joy that the Christ-Child had come, and come for their very sakes. They are Christians. They feel it and wish to sing it aloud in the dark, still night. They wish the joy of their thankful hearts to resound in all hearts, far and near, in which the dreary darkness of pagandom still slumbers.

For a little time a mysterious silence reigns over everything. All hearts are deeply moved

by the heavenly harmony to which the Christmas carol is wed. The throngs then move out of the little courtyard into the open country where the night-fires still smoulder. The fires are quickly rekindled, and around them the Christmas celebrations are continued in the rhythmic movements of the innocent dance to the accompaniment of songs taken up by alternate groups. As always, this is a joyful event, and is celebrated by a skilled precentor who introduces all manner of improvisations as he goes along. One thought returns in every form and variation: "It is Christmas, the great night of grace, and the Savior is come." The people listen with loud jubilation and enthusiasm.

Once more silence reigns over all as formerly in Bethlehem—a silence which was broken only by the voices of the angels announcing the coming of the Son of God. Like these angelic melodies, the two little bells begin to toll for the Midnight Mass from the slender scaffold which stands before the little church and serves as a belfry. Not a drum-beat any longer interrupts the Christmas quiet, as the crowd of Christians steal back into the courtyard and devoutly kneel around the altar.

When I extended to these silent worshipers the Christmas greeting: "Pax vobis," I felt as if a choir of angels stood amongst them and sang with me of the Christmas peace. All the holy Guardian Angels of these negroes, who have led

their charges from the benighted abyss of paganism into the bright realms of the Prince of Peace, must have lit up again in their hearts the golden star of grace, radiating the peace of heaven and the happiness of faith.

After the Midnight Pontifical Mass, a fragrant stillness settles down on the mission station. Alone, as formerly in the Crib, Our Savior rests in the tabernacle of the little church which is as poor as the stable in Bethlehem. Hanging like a star of grace over the Crib, the perpetual lamp sends its peaceful and loving beams through the gaping crevices of the window-shutters and through the cracks of the church door, as if to dispatch the greeting of the Prince of Peace out into the darkness of the night. "We are now going to sleep, O Savior, but we shall return very early to visit Thee." Such was our parting greeting to the Child Jesus through the narrow slits.

The Shepherds' Mass on Christmas morning was likewise attended by all the faithful, who numbered about six hundred. Then followed the true celebration of Christmas—a celebration so tender and fervent, so overflowing with grace and rapture. Our Eucharistic Savior, humble and small and silent, but bringing all His inexhaustive divine blessings with Him, enters the hearts of the faithful, whose faces beam with a heavenly Christmas splendor. Sweet hymns of joy re-echo in our hearts. With sweet emotion

and fervent love, with deepest gratitude and profound adoration, we again hear that moving hymn, which so well reflects the whole atmosphere of Christmas. Choirs of angels join in our heartfelt praise and thanksgiving, and exult with us in Our Savior's love:

Silent Night! Holiest Night!
Darkness flies and all is light!
Shepherds hear the angels sing:
Alleluia! hail the King!
Jesus the Savior is here!

Christ, Our Savior, has found us, and we have found Him.

"Jesus the Savior is here!" Filled with gratitude and joy, our eyes meet the affectionate look of the Christ-Child, and our hearts tremble with a holy joy. From the little hand which the Infant Savior raises in blessing, we feel grace pouring into our souls—the grace of redemption, with its unfathomable depths and inexhaustible riches, filling us with strength and life. We appreciate our indescribable good fortune in being permitted to call ourselves the children of God. As we kneel before the Crib, our souls feel as if they were made partakers in the divine nature, and we humbly implore: "O Jesus, take us as Thine own possession, and give Thyself to us." Our prayer becomes the simple faltering of a child. We feel ourselves once more little children before the Infant Savior in the Crib. The blessed peace which we felt in the unclouded days of childhood,

when the Divine Child smiled so lovingly and tenderly upon us, again floods our hearts. How rapid has been the development of the Christmas gifts which then hung from the twinkling Christmas tree! They have ripened into precious heavenly fruits such as no earthly tree has borne, and such as no earthly mother can give to her children. With the precious treasure of our holy Faith, the gracious source of heavenly blessing was opened to us. From the abundance of this spring we have received grace upon grace. "Jesus the Savior is here!" Such is the burden of the harmonious hymn which echoes in our hearts throughout the solemn ceremonies. No false note or grievous discord is allowed to mar the pure joy of our hearts on Christ's natal day.

The human heart which longs for peace, desires happiness, and seeks eternal joy, overflows with hymns of thanksgiving during the blessed season of Christmas. There are myriads, however, who wander joylessly through the gloomy ways of this valley of tears, enveloped in the thick shadows of paganism. Why do these unfortunates not come to the Crib there to receive consolation, rapture, and happiness? Alas! they do not yet enjoy our good fortune. If these brothers and sisters of ours also stood before the Crib, joining with us in acclaiming: "Jesus the Savior is here;" if only they also knelt beside us before the Crib to receive the sweet blessing of the Prince of Peace, our happiness would be complete!

But why are they not here? Because no rays of the Star of Bethlehem have yet reached them; because none has told them of the brightness of these rays; because none has shown them the way to the Crib—the way to Jesus.

Fully one thousand millions of pagans and Mohammedans wander through the trackless spiritual night. Shall no ray of the Star of Bethlehem fall across their path? Everything around them is dark and sullen; a black precipice lies right ahead. Shall they fall into this bottomless pit, and be lost forever? Like a black mourning veil, these thoughts descend over the bright mist which envelops our Christmas festivities. This dark veil, however, may be rent apart by our heartfelt determination to conduct the rays of the Star of Hope into the darkness of paganism, and to bring with these rays the source of the happiness of Christmas—the Christ-Child with His graces and blessings.

Grief and mourning, however, are not in accord with the blessed Christmas hymns. To share one's happiness with others, is the highest happiness! "The most divine of all divine works," the work of saving immortal human souls for heaven, has its beginning in the Crib. The Christ-Child, with His omnipotent power and His glowing love, has formed an image of God in our souls with His tender hands. Our souls reflect the workings of divine charity; the reflection of God shines from them. Should

not our own good fortune make us fall on our knees in heartfelt gratitude, and offer joyously our co-operation in the divine work which the Heart of our Infant Savior in the Crib so ardently desires to accomplish? The determination to co-operate thus with Our Redeemer will make our joy and our happiness complete.

Cold self-satisfaction may heartlessly pass by the needs of others, but it makes the heart joyless and robs it of every charm. Why does the Christmas-tree hold such attraction for the childlike heart? It is not merely because of the bright splendor of its rustling branches, its radiant twigs, its gilt gifts, and the pretty colored ribbons entwined with the soft green. The child's heart is not satisfied to gaze on the twinkling star and to admire the mysterious splendor. It is because the Christmas-tree distributes its gifts with open hands.

If our hearts are not moved by the needs of pagandom when we stand before the Crib or around the Christmas-tree on Christmas Eve; if, while our hearts are overflowing with grace and happiness during the joyful Christmas season, we do not feel pity for the poor pagans and solemnly resolve to bring them some of the superabundant gifts and joy which the Divine Child now showers on us, I fear that His tender hands will vainly knock on our hearts during the whole coming year, and who knows whether ever again His hands will knock with such an

urgency of love as now? Love retires weeping from hearts which fail to understand it, and seeks out hearts which are open to all its saving influences. Can we stand in the state garments of grace with which God's mercy has clad our souls, and still remain coldly apathetic towards the piteous creatures who, clad in the rags of spiritual misery, have so strong a claim on our compassion? How can we claim to love Our Savior if our conduct is so completely governed by selfishness?

We are to-day richly garbed in the heavenly splendor of God's love, and are laden down with divine graces. But the Christmas-tree, which has inspired so much joy in our hearts, will wither. Let us work then while it is still day. Let us share our gifts with open hands and kindly hearts. Do we fear that we shall become poor and unadorned if we share our superfluity with others? There in the Crib lies the Son of God: "He has humbled Himself, has taken the form of a servant, and become in all things like us poor, helpless men." And yet he has enriched us beyond measure, and His hands have remained ever full of graces so that their fullness suffices for the whole world. Nor has He Himself lost anything thereby, "for God hath exalteth Him, and hath given Him a name which is above all names: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend."

The beams of the Star of Bethlehem once penetrated into the distant pagan lands, and

summoned the Kings of Arabia, Saba, and Tarsis, and the Islands to the Crib of their King and God. So should the Name of Jesus shine throughout the world, ever enkindling the fire of faith and spreading still further the light of grace. Like a blazing fire, this Name should inflame and enlighten our hearts. We would then carry this fire into the darkness of the pagan world. If the Name of Jesus once glowed in all hearts—if the Sign of the Cross once shone on every forehead—how joyous a Christmas it would be for Our Savior, how rapturous for the angels, how blessed for men! The silent wish of Our Savior in the Crib would be thus fulfilled, His loving quest completed. The angels' song would then mount up in new hymns of jubilation to heaven, and the world would attain the holy peace of God, as it knelt in adoration before its Redeemer, and wept tears of pure joy because it had at last recovered its lost Paradise.

We can contribute our share—perhaps a large share—towards making this only Christmas wish of Our Savior a reality, if we take this wish seriously to heart. With its fervor renewed by the warmth emanating from the Heart of the Infant Savior in the Crib, our missionary enthusiasm may become the bright signal which will attract very many others within the magical jurisdiction of His redeeming love, so that thousands and even millions will find the finger-

post to the Crib of Our Savior in the Christmas Star which has risen in our hearts. This light, which attracts souls and brings them to their Redeemer, will necessarily extend to eternity, where, in its heavenly transfiguration, it will envelop us, reflected from myriads of redeemed souls. "They that instruct many to justice, shall shine as stars for all eternity." In heaven their Christmas will abide for all eternity.

II. LOVE'S WOOING

Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King:
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!

Joyful, all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies:
With the angelic host proclaim,
Christ is born in Bethlehem!

Christ, by highest heaven adored!
Christ, the everlasting Lord:
Late in time behold Him come,
Offspring of the Virgin's womb:

Veiled in flesh the Godhead see:
Hail the incarnate Deity.
Pleased as Man with men to dwell;
Jesus, our Emmanuel:

Risen with healing in His wings,
Light and life to all He brings.
Hail, the Son of righteousness:
Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace.

Such is the picture which pious simplicity paints of the gracious night, and the moving spectacle of God's love lives on in our hearts. It is Christmas. The frosty north wind, which rattles the windows and doors, drives the cold showers of rain over Bethlehem, playing a lullaby about the Savior in the Crib. Still night has cast her heavy mantle over the town. The flickering fires in the houses and huts of this Eastern land die out slowly one by one, and the last murmur of the joyous conversation, which the happiness of reunion unloosed, dies away in the deepening darkness.

So was it the whole world over. It was growing ever darker. God's love had appeared in Paradise, with gracious warmth and heavenly splendor. Night came, cold and loveless. The glowing embers of a remembrance of God sank slowly into the ashes of sensuality, and what God had once spoken with man in loving conversation, was swept away by the storms of passion and drowned in the hoarse laughter of awakened lust. The world grew spiritually barren. Scarcely a word of the divine revelation was preserved to move men's hearts and to prompt them to strive for higher things—for the highest goal of all, reunion with God.

A flood of rays fell on a poor stable outside Bethlehem, pouring the light of everlasting day, with all its glory and clearness, over a lonely crib. Heavenly music was meanwhile heard in

strains unknown and, alas! strange to human ears.

The air resounds with exultant songs. Clearer grows the light and louder the voices. Suddenly, the terrified shepherds hear the exulting choir approach, singing: "Gloria in excelsis Deo et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis" (Glory be to God on high and on earth peace to men of good will). Love and awe supplant the anxious bewilderment of the shepherds. They come to a little Child, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and greet and adore Him as their Divine Redeemer.

"Gloria Deo, pax hominibus" (Glory be to God and peace to men), such is the most beautiful of Christmas hymns, sung by the angelic hosts who surround the heavenly throne, adoring their God. This hymn exhales a heavenly rapture about the humble Crib. The sweetest of Christmas poems, celebrating the love of God and the incomprehensible union of Divinity and humanity when God became man for love of us, brings heaven and earth together about the Crib. The most joyful Christmas greeting, brought down from heaven to earth, awakens a most loving echo, such as never before resounded in the heart of man.

Glory be to God! The love of God the Son for His Eternal Father is great and strong. It has already traversed the long way from heaven down to earth. He means to return

again, and bring to His Father the hearts of men, who shall again love their kind Father and do honor to their Lord and God. Like a solemn triumphal hymn, the Gloria mounts up to heaven, and a holy joy penetrates the heart of man.

Peace to men! For thousands of years man's heart has sought and longed for peace. The anxious cry: "Pax, pax" (Peace, peace) has long been raised, but mountain and valley have replied: "Non est pax" (There is no peace). And now God's messenger brings this sweet word of comfort to men's hearts, giving at last a joyful answer to the old, old cry: "Peace on earth to men of good will," for the Prince of Peace is come.

And then all is still as before. The misty night has hidden the star with its loving fire and its rays of hope. The hosts of angels have returned to heaven and are heard no more. What will now become of the "gloria Deo" and the "pax hominibus"? Was the hymn sung to console a few shepherds for a single rapturous moment? Was the apparition an unsubstantial dream, intended merely to serve as a riddle for a few tribes on the borders of the lake? Was the star which pierced the darkness of the earth only a deceptive will-o'-the-wisp, which for centuries held salvation before the eyes of millions of earthly pilgrims merely to conduct them finally back into the night of nothingness from which they emerged?

What of the thousand million children of God, who languish in the starless night of unbelief, deprived of their inheritance? Is their loss to be final and irrevocable? Filled with the ecstasies of Christian joys, let us for a moment direct our eyes sorrowfully towards them, and fold our hands in anxious prayer that Christmas may also come for them.

The angels, it is true, no longer bring their greetings of peace to the world. The flaming star is extinguished which shone like a joyful sign-post through the dark labyrinths of the world and blazed the sign of peace across the skies. But the angels have committed their message of peace to our hearts, which should reflect the gracious light of Our Redeemer so that it might enlighten also the pagan world. The peace of God should develop in our souls to works of peace. The rays of peace and love, issuing from the heavenly peace within us, should serve as a guiding star for those who are lost in the gloom of paganism. Through us should all those benighted souls find their way home to peace everlasting. This is the mystery of love. Through His love the Savior wishes to live on in us until all are brought within the scope of His divine charity—until the whole grand program of His love for His Father and His love for us has been completed: “Gloria Deo, pax hominibus!”

To honor His eternal Father is the first purpose of the Infant Savior in the Crib. Towards

this object, from their first opening, His eyes were directed. In this first glance up towards His Heavenly Father, the children of men of all ages and countries were included. The whole purpose of His mission is embraced in a single thought with which the Divine Heart of Our Savior is filled: "God will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." In leaving us His Sacred Name, and thereby making us children of His Eternal Father, Christ has also left us the duty, as His heirs, of preserving the holy will of His Heavenly Father. He has taught us to pray with firm faith and earnest will: "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Does it not, therefore, closely affect the hallowed Name of God if thousands of people carve for themselves a caricature which they set up in place of the one, true God? Are we content to do nothing to bring these luckless peoples to the knowledge of their God, and to make them acquainted with the loving kindness of their Heavenly Father? Are we content to let chance decide whether this Father can clasp them to His loving Heart, or whether they shall remain separated from Him forever? If so, our love for God can be scarcely any greater than that of the poor pagans themselves. Through lack of understanding, they turn aside from God, while we know the will of God, but refuse to fulfill it.

In the still air of the clear night, our eye rests on the glitter of the Christmas star. The Christmas-tree is decked in all its splendor, and now diffuses light and warmth to every heart. Look yonder in the pagan lands, and see the sun rising like a fiery ball above the horizon. With gloomy awe in their eyes and in timid homage, the people cast themselves on their knees and adore the sun-god. And when dark night has drawn her mysterious curtain before their god, they assemble around the "holy fire" which they maintain in the temple as a reflection of this spirit. While their dreamy eyes gaze into the shooting flames, their dissatisfied hearts hoping for protection from its crackling and seeking consolation in its glare, would that a ray of grace from the true Light of the World, who now lies in the Crib, might penetrate into their benighted souls, fill them with the light of a true knowledge of God, and still the unconfessed longing of their hearts! Notwithstanding all the mistaken expression of their feelings, they are men of good-will. If only they were taught to know their true God! But perhaps God's longing for these souls and His mercy await only upon our love before they shed their soft and soothing brilliance into this spiritual night.

"Glory be to God!" There are, alas! hymns far different from those which spoke of salvation and consolation about Bethlehem. Spell-bound negroes are whirling in a wild dance

around the sacrifices to the dead, hoping thus to propitiate the spirit of the deceased. With shrill voices, they join in the magician's shouts for rain. Unmeaning magical phrases have converted a worthless piece of wood, a claw, or a piece of horn into a precious amulet, which will protect its bearer against the wickedness of the malicious spirits. Of the all-good God, whose paternal eyes watch over them, and of His kindly care for them, they know nothing. If their Heavenly Father, though forgotten and misconceived, does send the rain, they celebrate the mighty power of the magician which can thus control the rain-clouds. The all-good God is ignored; His loving providence awakens no gratitude or recognition. And yet it is He who allows the sun to shine on good and evil alike, and sends the rain at the proper season. It is He who invites even these piteous mortals to appeal to His paternal benevolence: "Ask, and ye shall receive." We could show them the way to their Father's Heart, so that they also may receive His blessing, and praise their Father who is in heaven.

"Peace to men?" Godless men have no peace. They have turned aside from God, and, instead of walking in His way, have surrendered themselves to the storms of their passions, which drive them through the gloomy marshes of sensuality, restless, joyless, and without peace. I should not care to—nor could I—draw a

picture of the moral plight of pagandom. I should have to paint, in all the most gloomy shades, the specious allurements of sin to disclose the awful errors of vice. How could one represent on canvas the shrieking discord which disfigures the image of God beyond all recognition, the spirit of evil and deceit which passes off the bad and hateful as good and beautiful, which transmits vice in national customs from generation to generation, which allows no exaltation of spirit to ennoble the soul, and regards unfettered sensual pleasures as the only joy for which the blunted heart has still perception? Poor people! I had almost added: "Poor Father in heaven!" Are these, then, His children over whom He must lament and sigh: "Sons have I nurtured to man's estate, but they have despised Me." If, instead of doing glory to their God, they scorn Him, we at least should take this fact seriously to heart. When will these lost sons return to the Father, who looks towards them with such passionate love and who longs to press them to His Heart, where peace awaits them? Who would not gladly undertake the rôle of mediator between such a Father and His erring children? Who would not do his share, in so far as his strength and means allow, in bringing these restless unfortunates to the holy peace of God, the sweet refuge of their souls? "How beautiful are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, and that preacheth peace." Peace clings to their footsteps. Peaceful palms

spring up where the messenger of peace treads, bringing the blessing of the law of God even though it is a bare wilderness into which the missionary has penetrated, even though he himself must all too soon sink down exhausted under the palms which his heroic faith and his zealous love have planted. The gate of the great city of peace, the Catholic Church, opens, and we can hear within, the clear voices of children singing, as it were, a sweet Christmas hymn:

Urbs Ierusalem beata	Vivis ex lapidibus
Dicta pacis visio	Et Angelis coronata
Quae construitur coelis	Ut sponsata comite.*

Tears of joy roll down on the toil-worn hands of many a good mother as she listens to this hymn. After a joyless life of sorrow and suffering she has now attained peace. Not with dull outcries of despair has she worn thin the thread of life. In angelic accord with the bells which now ring of peace, she will soon pass away to the eternal peace of heaven. Above splintered lances and sharp battle-axes, rusting with the blood of foes, the Cross will rise with its outstretched arms, shedding peace over the land, banishing hatred, murder, and plunder, and proclaiming a universal charity. The Savior with His loving kindness and friendship for man will reside amongst us. Christmas will come.

* O Jerusalem thrice-blessed! thou vision of peace constructed in the heavens from the souls of the blessed and surrounded, like a bride, with a retinue of angels!

For nineteen hundred years the sound-waves of peace are ever widening, and are spreading out in concentric circles, whose sublime focus is the Crib. These circles carry the great word of peace out into the gracious night. But, just as these sound-waves die away in a vacuum, the blessing of Christmas cannot penetrate into loveless hearts. Only hearts that are filled with love can transmit the jubilant hymn of heavenly peace to others until all hearts have succumbed to its divine rapture.

It is the Savior's love which glows and burns in the heart of the missionary. It is this love which inflames thousands and millions with enthusiasm for missionary activities. A love which is inflamed by the fire of the Divine Heart will share in the loving conquests of the Redeemer, and co-operate with Him in extending the kingdom of love throughout the world. It will set up the conquering symbol of love on the very confines of the earth, and will never rest until all peoples render homage to the Prince of Peace.

Cold calculating persons will here intervene, and try to dampen the ardor of love-inflamed souls: "What end is attained if a missionary fashions a homely cross out of a rough stone and with calloused hands builds a poor hut among the still more wretched huts of the natives in some deserted corner of Africa far beyond the last frontier of civilization, where the agonizing

cry of the dying victim rends the air, and sends a thrill through murderous hearts? What end is attained if he begins to teach the negro children of an unknown God of goodness, even if they finally submit to be baptized? Their souls are not yet penetrated to their inmost depths by Christianity. They do not yet comprehend the awesome mysteries of our Faith. They are still far from conceiving the infinite majesty of God. They can never, absolutely never, grasp the height and depth and breadth of the Christian Faith." Such is the conclusion of pessimistic critics.

It is true that towering obstacles must be removed before the tribes at a low stage of civilization can rise to the eminence of a clear knowledge of God and the true love for Him. But as to the question whether they will approach nearer to Christian thought, or will never understand it—whether they will accept the spirit of Christ or whether Christianity will hang upon them like a light mantle, scarcely covering the harsh features of their savage nature—on these questions history will inform us. For nineteen hundred years past it has been engaged in the writing of a glorious eulogy on Christianity.

History has already dealt with these critics who could not be interested in a king of Israel that preferred to establish His throne in a dilapidated stable, rather than in an ostentatious palace. History has finally disposed of those

others who could feel no enthusiasm for the twelve unlettered fishermen who were chosen to execute Christ's glorious plans for His Church and to build up this edifice on such unseemly beginnings. To such dissatisfied critics, history pointed out our own forbears in whose religious views dreams of Wotan, white Balder, and light elves were intermingled with the Christian teaching of the Almighty Creator in heaven, of Our Redeemer, and of the bright forms of the angelic choirs. Finally, however, all thoughts of Wotan, Balder, the Elves, Donar, and Freia were expelled by the Cross. History also even to this day writes page after page in praise of the Trinity and of that all-conquering charity which is even now best understood by the poor. Not alone has it celebrated the uninterrupted fidelity of the Christians of China, Japan, and Corea, who prized so highly their Savior, His love, and their obligations to Him that they marched joyfully to death; it also shows that even tribes which are lowest in the scale of civilization are very rapidly transformed by this fiery charity into heroic bands, who will accept martyrdom with a courage born of heroic faith. We ourselves have known a recent instance of this among the Christians of Uganda in Central Africa. While I was writing this chapter, I received a Decree of the Congregation of Rites (dated August 12, 1912), which contains the following information regarding the conclusion

of the proceedings in connection with the beatification of the twenty-two martyrs: "The heroic youths of the court of the Negro King Mwanga of Uganda, who, as established by historical facts, scorned riches and the attractions of the world, and offered their lives as an agreeable sacrifice to God, undergoing the greatest pain and tortures to defend their faith in Christ and to preserve His love." The incidents referred to occurred in the years 1885-1887. History still stands, and will hereafter stand, in the watch-tower, looking towards the Star of Bethlehem as it sends the light of faith and the fire of charity into human hearts. What matters it if dissatisfied calculators cannot, despite all such facts as the above, become enthusiastic for the missions and their success—what matters their attitude if enthusiasm for the missions would seize all who love their Savior, and realize how He loves souls? If only these would join in the heaven-aspiring Gloria and in the earth-transforming Pax, all the others might then calculate, hesitate, and hinder just as they pleased. Before the moment arrives when these latter think it safe to express it, the salutation of peace has died on their lips under the corroding influence of unaided human reasoning. And, as for the glory of God, it fares no better.

Love has always to undergo severe tests. It may not complain when, after the greatest efforts and almost superhuman strivings, it encounters

failure or only a fleeting success. With assured confidence, it must keep its attention fixed on God and God's glory, and work with quiet benignity for the spiritual needs of its neighbors. Thus, the Bishop of Osaka in Japan and his missionaries complained to me that their activities had accomplished so little notwithstanding their self-sacrificing zeal and indescribable sacrifices. Many of the missionaries, who had labored conscientiously at their posts for twenty-five years, and who, in their ardent love of souls, were ever making new plans to bring the Japanese to a better realization of the beauty and sublimity of the Christian teachings, had made not more than fifty converts during this period. The joyful missionary enthusiasm, which encounters hearty sympathy in the missionary lands, must halt in dumb amazement before such heroic courage, such strong faith, such fidelity to their task, and such childlike simplicity in their acceptance of the inscrutable purposes of God. Perhaps some day the harvest will be otherwise. Perhaps with a warm, springtime sun of grace, will begin the germination of the seed which has been scattered amidst tears and with so persevering a love. Perhaps we shall witness the return of the glorious times when thousands of Japanese rushed longingly to the bosom of the Church. As far indeed as mere human judgment can see, this day will not come until the people, who are now sunk in the depth

of materialism and can only painfully eke out their daily existence and pay the extraordinary state taxes, see the dawn of a better era—a springtime of a higher culture, a culture of the heart. But cannot Christianity, with its great ideals, extend the call of peace to this struggling people, and divert it from the deceptive path which it pursues in search of a fleeting happiness and a false peace—divert it from cultural strivings which refuse to have anything to do with religion? To this end we must work without complaint, and pray without intermission.

Missionary labor is a work after the very Heart of Our Savior—a work which is consumed with charity, but leaves the results to God. A great, strong faith throws the weight of love into the scales in which works are measured against success. It is love which will not allow the laborer to grow weary—the unconquerable strength of the love which has drawn its living warmth from the incalculable love of the Savior of the World. God rewards us, not according to our success, but according to the love which we have applied to our work.

Quietly and calmly the Divine Love waits in the Crib, often delaying long before it takes its flight to distant lands. There it grows up slowly, and develops for thirty years until the hearts of the first disciples comprehend it. Then it hangs on the Cross, and under this Cross two loving hearts would fain break,

while the others fear and despair while their own hopes almost expire with their Master. And yet love has conquered, and calls out to us: "Have confidence, I have overcome the world." Persevere and labor, ye warriors of God! Work and struggle, not for success, but for charity's sake. The success of your cause pertains to God alone.

Even the home enthusiasm for the missions is enkindled less by successes than by the love which emanates from the Crib and the Cross—the love which is nourished daily in the sacrifice of the Holy Mass and in Holy Communion (the renewal of Christ's death and birth), and answers unselfishly the loud call of Our Redeemer's love. "Gloria Deo, pax hominibus!"

III. LOVE'S SACRIFICE

The Church, God's holy bride, stands in fervent meditation before the Crib. She looks and marvels and prays—now aloud and now softly, now in assembled choir and now in clear boyish voices which ring out silvery, as if they wished to transmit their joy in the fulfilled promise to all hearts: "The people were wandering in the darkness, and now the light has dawned for them." Tears of emotion, stammered words of gratitude, vows inspired by warm love and holy fidelity are called forth by this holy chant.

Ah! were we ourselves not these poor people until the poorest of God's children made us rich!

The Son of God has laid aside His sublime majesty and heavenly riches to consort with our dreary poverty and our deep misery. He brings divine garments for our souls, which He would clothe with the purest gold of love and the most precious pearls of grace. From the straw of the Crib and clad with thin swaddling clothes, the sweet Infant appeals to us, presenting a unique picture whose unfathomable mystery our joyful eyes may study, and our beating hearts would fain grasp.

A Saint kneels before the Crib in the wretched garments of a beggar. His eye is lighted with the fire of love; a golden halo transfigures his countenance, as he gazes upon the smiling poverty of the poorest Son of man—the Sacred Son of God. The kneeling figure is St. Francis, the poor man of Assisi. He takes the thoughts which the Crib has awakened in his heart, and puts them in verses inspired by his poetic soul and his heartfelt sincerity. His love soars heavenward to the bright throne of God, around which the angels move suffused with the divine light, celebrating in celestial hymns their unshadowed bliss. St. Francis sees the angels hurry to the throne of God, summoned by the Eternal Father. They then depart to seek a bride for the Son of the Most High—a bride

so beautiful and so sublime as had never yet been seen in heaven. The angels search heaven's spacious halls, where the majesty, the riches, and the omnipotence of their Lord is reflected as if from precious jewels and glittering gold. All these glories were created by God's word, but, however industrious their search, the angels return disheartened and confess their inability to find anything so unique, so great, and exalted that they might present it to the Son of God. The angels then descend to the earth, and continue their quest. They have now reached Bethlehem and discover a neglected stable and a decaying manger, in which the animals had left behind a little hay and straw when the fresh pastures and vernal shoots beckoned them from God-blessed nature. Since then they have not returned. In the walls, like glittering jewels, damp and cold stalactites sparkle. The frosty wind rushes hissing and howling through the cob-webbed windows, which show a variety of hues in the misty twilight. Desolate, cold, bitter poverty has here established its obscure home. Like the tears of weeping misery, the damp drops splash down from the dismal roof on the drenched mud floor, when the angels open the creaking door, bringing a raw, icy draft into this dwelling of poverty. "This is what we were to seek for the Eternal Son of God. Heaven with its immeasurable, indescribable riches possesses all things and offers all things except this bride—holy poverty, who wanders on earth

decked with the unknown jewels of tears, and heaven knows her not." God's messengers then speed back to heaven, fetch the Son of God to bring Him to the poverty-stricken stable of Bethlehem and place Him in the arms of the poor Virgin. She receives Him, wraps Him in shabby swaddling clothes, and lays Him on the damp straw of the Crib, committing Him to holy poverty. With the soft heavenly song of the angels mingles the hymn in which the Church, filled with happiness and wondering gratitude, celebrates the espousals of heaven's King with earthly poverty.

A solis ortus cardine	From where the sun's first rays appear,
Ad usque terrae limitem	To the earth's most distant limits,
Christum canamus Principem	Christ our Prince we gladly sing —
Natum Maria Virgine.	Christ born of the Virgin Mary.
Beatus auctor saeculi	The bless'd Creator of the world,
Servile corpus induit	Assumed a lowly human body,
Ut carne carnem liberans	As man to liberate mankind,
Ne perderet quos condidit.	To save from ruin whom He created.
Foeni iacere pertulit.	A bed of straw He freely chose,

Praesepe non abhorruit,	He freely chose a humble manger,
Parvoque lacte pastus est,	Dependent on His mother's care,
Per quem nec ales esurit.	Though every bird on Him dependeth.

This hymn of gratitude swells out of the porches of the cathedrals and the freezing little country churches. Out into the world it spreads exultingly, carrying the jubilant and consoling spirit of Christmas into the frosty, sorrowful huts of the poor. Under the star-sown Christmas-tree it sounds, telling the exulting children of the poor Christ-Child and reminding them of all the poor who, asking in His name, knock today at the hearts of men of good-will.

In the long, glad days of preparation for Christmas, kind hearts have collected money and gifts to bring some Christmas cheer to the poor children of the large cities and to the needy children of the towns, who are accustomed to see only a bleak, empty room and dark, dreary faces. On Christmas Eve charity celebrates a feast of joy. The blessed happiness of giving is transformed in the jubilation of the children who receive the gifts. Should the poorest of all go away empty-handed, because they are farther away, and because their cry for help is not so urgent in our ears? Has not Our Savior's love, interceding with moving power in their behalf, knocked at our hearts? Is not spiritual want

more bitter than bodily hunger or cold, or the tears which course down children's frost-bitten cheeks? Blessed is the love which lends sympathetic, active aid to these unfortunates! If souls hunger after truth, they freeze in the spiritual night; but what if they should eventually perish in everlasting death! Such a fate threatens very, very many. And on their behalf Our Savior pleads: "Have mercy on us!"

A merciful love delights in making a sacrifice. The purest and most necessary sacrifice for the salvation of these helpless people—the sacrifice which all can offer and all must offer, if they are to remain children of the Holy Catholic Church—is prayer.

Everything depends on the blessing of God, which is the guiding line of the missionary program. The Apostle of the Gentiles expresses it only in another way—the main idea is the same—when he says: "Neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase." Prayer opens heaven, allowing the rain of grace to stream down on the mission fields and into pagan hearts. Under the influence of the warm blessings of heaven, hard hearts are thawed sufficiently to receive the divine seed of truth and salvation. And Our Savior Himself, when concerned about the sprouting seeds and the longed-for heavenly harvest, thinks first of prayer. Where the yellowing fields of grain bend with ripened ears, and the reaper sharpens his

sickle for the joyous harvest, there extends itself before the eyes of God a fruitful land which He will cultivate. Fruits of salvation will ripen there, and men's souls will be harvested for the everlasting granary in heaven. With a melancholy mixture of joy and sorrow, of hope and fear, He sees future people develop for the reception of the holy Gospel, and He lets us know what He sees, and what moves His Sacred Heart: "The harvest is great, but the laborers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest that He may send laborers into His harvest." "Pray! pray!" that is Our Savior's command to all. Pray for laborers!

Was it our work of which Jesus was then thinking? We may well think so. The blades of grain are already turning yellow. The full ears hang heavily down. If they fall before the harvesting hour arrives, they will rot and perish. The whole world is opened, civilization is advancing with assured step to the farthest corner of the globe; the peoples have been brought into constant intercourse; railways, steamships, and restless telegraphy promote this intercourse and interchange of ideas. Men assemble together, carry the waves of national movements over lands and oceans, as if on the wings of the breeze, and draw whole continents in their train. The singular opportunities thus presented for the extension of the missionary work strongly urge us to fulfill our obligations to pagandom. The people

develop visibly to maturity—either as spiritual kingdoms, in which God can take His honored throne, or as material kingdoms, which rise in external pomp above submerged ideas of God. These countries develop either into a section of heaven on earth or into a section of heavenless earth; they declare either for Christ or for Mohammed, Buddha, or Confucius—for faith or neo-paganism; for Christian culture or for economic exploitation; for the freedom of the children of God and a true civilization or for modern slavery.

In view of the terrible menace of this situation, which must affect man's condition for centuries and even for all eternity, one thing only can give us peace of mind: the thought that the Father of mankind watches over us, and wills the welfare and salvation of His children. He even sends His Divine Son to the market-places of life to seek laborers and co-workers. Some He urges: "Go ye also into My vineyard;" He sets Himself before the others as their pattern, teaching them to petition the Father with Him: "Father, sanctify them in truth . . . that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast also loved Me."

The great aid to be derived from prayer is proved especially on the mission. We should learn this fact from Our Savior, who, after exhausting journeys through the districts of Judea, returned to the desert in the evening to pray alone.

Conversion is the work of grace. Only thus can we understand how great missionaries, like St. Francis Xavier, in almost every letter asked their brothers in religion to pray that God might use them as an instrument for the conversion of pagans. Hence, missionaries never weary of asking for our prayers. On prayer depends the whole work of the missions. Surely, Catholics should not in this respect fall behind the Protestants, who expressly declared at the Edinburgh Congress of the Missions of the World that prayer was the first and chief aid in missionary work.

Prayer opens for us the treasures of God. It is the golden key by which we can gain admission to heaven, and there grasp with open hands the inexhaustible treasures of redeeming grace and saving charity so as to distribute them in the richest measure among thousands and millions of our fellow-men.

What a sublime Christmas happiness it is which permits our eyes to see through the shining poverty of the Crib into the blessed glories of heaven! But the greatest Christmas happiness of all is ours, if through our intercession all this heavenly bliss is brought down into men's souls. There it is really Christmas where the love, blessing, and peace of the Son of God dwell. If we have been already blessed by the reception of these heavenly gifts of grace, still more blessed will be our hearts if we assist in their distribution amongst others, since to give is more blessed than

to receive. Who has not experienced this? Who has not felt sweet peace in his inmost heart as a divine recompense when he deposited a small gift in the hand of some poor child? Anguish of soul and spiritual need, however, call still more loudly for help and compassion, and spiritual succor is thus doubly blessed. It is in our power not only to give crumbs to hungering souls, not only a drink of water to thirsting hearts: much more than this can we do, for we can divert to them whole streams of grace. Grace, by its all-conquering intercessory power, makes us almighty.

The curtains of the Crib are moved a little aside. Poverty still marks the stable over which shines the holy star, beckoning the Three Kings hither with its rays. They approach the Son of God, and with the incense which rises sweetly to heaven like prayer from fervent hearts, they offer also their other gifts—gold and myrrh in homage to the humble King's Son in the Crib.

The Christ-Child receives the gifts in silent divine gratitude, and lays His hand on each gift which is given for the conversion of pagans. His blessing also streams out over those who, kneeling before the Crib in childlike simplicity, and with childlike love, regard themselves as offering their gifts to the Savior Himself in person. This indeed they do, for He is present among them. In the name of the pagan world, whom He is come to save, Our Savior knocks on gentle hearts, often indeed with the anxiety and

timidity which Our Blessed Lady felt as she knocked at the doors seeking admission and shelter for herself and the Divine Child in her womb after her long and painful journey to Bethlehem. She knocks from door to door, but there is no room for her there. This refusal resounds like a long-drawn-out echo from house to house. Mary moves on with her Divine Child, who longs to bring grace and peace to men. With difficulty she struggles on a little further, and in a desolate stable the Mother of God presents the world with its Savior.

Grace knocks gently but distinctly on Catholic hearts, urging them to help Our Savior gain admission into hearts which sin has closed, so that He may be born in them. How often is this grace rejected, and with it the grace of charity, the grace of mercy, and the peace which Our Savior brings. "I have no room in my heart for such ideas," one complains. "They may be very beautiful, but I am already fully occupied with other things. Everybody comes and begs for assistance in the name of Christ." I would ask such a person to consider for a moment whether there is not in his heart a corner for the paramount purpose which brought Jesus Christ down from heaven to earth, developed with Him as He grew, and ascended with Him to the Cross—the salvation of the souls of all mankind. Shall we allow this purpose to die and never rise from the grave? Will this purpose not survive in Chris-

tian hearts, wherein Jesus also lives? If we can reject this last tender plea of our gentle Savior, He must depart sorrowfully and knock for admission into other hearts. Where could Our Savior find an appreciation of His divine plan, if it is not in Catholic hearts on whom He has lavished His whole love? To whom else could He offer the grace of co-operating in His work of salvation, if not to His disciples who rejoice and glory in His Sacred Name?

No one may forget his neighbors in their corporal or spiritual necessities. He who would desert his relatives, his friends, his home, or his country in the battle of life or the still sterner battle for faith and morals, must tremble at the stern words of the Apostle: "Such a one is worse than the heathen." The necessities of those around us demand our active aid and magnanimous kindness. We must make the interests of all our fellow-men our own. Catholic hearts especially must not be narrow or small; they must be saving hearts of a charity so broad that they embrace all mankind. A heart of this broad charity will prove itself in its ingenious love.

Is it right for me to betray the secrets of a heart? If so, my dear friend George will forgive me, for the story will not hurt him, and may perhaps encourage others to similar sacrifices. We were at the ecclesiastical seminary together. He was, like myself, a poor student without money. But money is not necessary to awaken and foster

an ideal, and the zeal for missionary work had been sown in our souls—by whom or how, I know not. Such zeal was not so common in those days, when there were few periodicals devoted to the missions. However, a little group of us had been formed, and, while others of the students buried themselves in their newspapers and later discussed the news and politics, you might see one of this group engrossed in a book. His neighbor to the right or the left tried to steal a look at the book, but could discover nothing as to its nature. The title of the book was carefully concealed, and, whenever a new chapter was reached whose title might betray its contents, the reader covered the heading with his hand. What could the book be? It could not be a forbidden book, for it evidently was from the seminary library. Had I been asked by some curious neighbor, I could have revealed the secret, for I had taken out the book myself. It was the biography of Blessed Perboyre, who had been martyred in China in 1840. George next read the life of the heroic Father Damien Deveustre, the apostle of the lepers, and then an article on Cardinal Lavigerie.

George's enthusiasm for the missions thus grew more ardent, and his fiery interest demanded expression in personal sacrifice. He would gladly have contributed to the mission funds, if he could have saved by any possible economies. But he had already to economize so much in his expenses that he was compelled to turn every

penny thrice in his hand before spending it. A plan, however, occurred to him. In those days the anti-alcoholic movement had not yet gained its strength of later years. The alumni of the seminary were given a little beer with their mid-day and evening meals, and greatly relished this addition to the good fare. A few of the students, with whom beer did not agree, had informed the Regent of the seminary of this fact, and were allowed two cents a day for the litre of beer given daily to each student. One day George slipped up to the Regent's room, impelled by a heroic resolution. To assist the missions, he had resolved to renounce beer for a whole year. As if he were on some disgraceful errand, he looked around carefully to see whether anyone was watching him. He evidently feared lest some of his fellow-students might read in his confused face the hidden secret of his heart. He knocked lightly on the Regent's door, entered, and timidly made his request: "I would like to drink no more beer during the school-year." "If you can do without it, it would perhaps be a good thing for you." "Oh, I can easily get on without it." "Very well, just as you wish."

Although he did not find complete abstinence so very easy, he persevered in it until the close of the school-year. When he received two bright gold pieces from the Regent, his heart was filled with joy. "Are you going to use them for a holiday trip?" George turned scarlet as

he looked at the Regent, but said nothing. The mention of a holiday trip, however, had touched something hidden deep in his heart, and he began to meditate: "How beautiful it must be to stroll through the Tyrolese Mountains! It would be good for one's health after the long months of unending study. I have labored enough during the year, sitting quietly over my books. I ought now to have some change and exercise." After a pause, the voice within him continued in an urgent whisper: "The money is a nice foundation for your journey. You have well earned it by your self-denial. Give it to the missions? Why, you have not yet promised it, and can thus do with it whatever you please. To this money your mother will add something. During the first month of your vacation you can earn some more by tutoring, and then—long live the Tyrol! The mountains will echo and re-echo my yodling." The question was thus quickly decided.

His father and mother both contributed to his little stock, and he undertook to tutor a rich man's son for a month. Every morning and afternoon he appeared conscientiously at the mansion, the prospect of the glorious trip lending attraction to his work. He labored earnestly to impart to his pupil so much knowledge that the latter would undoubtedly succeed in his examination.

The holiday tuition came to an end. The pure holiday joys to be gained from God's unspoiled nature might now begin.

"Mother, tomorrow I start for the mountains."

"The money is yours, and you can do with it what you wish. Go in God's name, and enjoy yourself thoroughly."

Morning breaks and everything is ready for the journey. A little package of linen and provisions had been prepared. His mother insisted on enclosing enough provisions for some days, as "the home-made bread would remind him of his mother and save his money." George had a hundred marks enclosed in a little leather purse.

As a last preparation for his journey, George went with his mother to church. With his young heart already bathed in the sunshine reflected from the laughing mountains, George thanks God for all His love and for all the divine graces he had received during the previous year. Then suddenly before his mind appear the missionaries and their poor protégés, and his soul is transported far away over the mountains and the sea to where, sheltered by rustling palms, the wretched negro huts, poor schoolhouses, and needy missionary dwellings depend upon God's mercy for their support. Gradually he recalls his wandering thoughts and directs them to the altar from which a mysterious, reverential light now shines on him. It is no longer the joyful sunlight which dances over the gilded columns and seems to

invite him to the free, bright mountain-tops, with their gaily colored flowers and softly sighing pine-trees, with their rocks gilded by the setting sun and the jubilant choir of ten thousand little songbirds giving their glorious symphonies in nature's spacious temple. It is the gentle, timid whispering of grace which almost hesitates to remind him of his former spirit of sacrifice, but is refracted in heavenly rays from the altar and pleads coaxingly with George's heart like a child wheedling something from its mother. It tells him of the blessed happiness of giving, of the purest gold of love, of the silver notes which goodness strikes in blessed hearts, and of the heavenly garments which the hands of God and merciful men have woven for poor pagan souls who now rejoice in the high courts of heaven, singing the praise of God and their gratitude to their benefactors.

After his mother had left to make some purchases, George remained behind for a little while. Finally, he also departed with the same joyful bearing which had characterized him all the morning, and had not forsaken him even in the church. Now, however, the hand of grace appeared to have added, after the custom of painters of old, a succinct inscription to this picture of blessed joy: "*Hilarem datorem diligit Deus*" (God loves a joyful giver). George hurries to the post office, enters quickly and asks for a money order. "How much do you wish to send," he was questioned.

"One hundred marks." The order was soon filled out, and mailed "for the poor pagan children."

With a light, but almost impatient, heart George returned home.

"Why hurry so quickly?" asked his mother. "You are not starting on your journey for over an hour."

"I am not going, mother; I am remaining at home. Do you mind?"

"Not at all. But what are you doing with the money?"

"I have not got it any longer. I have given it away."

"Why?" asked his mother closely scrutinizing his blushing face. "Oh, I know; you've sent it to the mission house. I daresay we shall have to give you away as well." Tears roll down her cheeks. "Well, God's will be done. Follow where your conscience leads. I would have liked to have you near me in my old age. But if that is your vocation, and God would have it so, do what you consider your duty."

One year later George, who had been recently ordained, knocked on the door of a missionary seminary. He brought with him nothing but his priestly heart, which was ready to offer itself as an oblation, and longed only to be allowed to work for Christ and to win souls for Him.

These are genuine sacrifices of love. I do not know whether the sacrifice is greater for the

young priest, who sees a life of the hardest labors and self-denial rise up on the horizon like black storm-clouds on an early summer afternoon, or for the parents, who sorrowfully feel the hour of separation draw steadily nearer. Their hearts are agitated like a blue Alpine lake troubled by a strong wind. They would not, and dare not, refuse to God the sacrifice which He asks of them. Such are the victories which love must win over itself.

There is, however, a still more intimate and magnanimous love which submits unquestioningly to the sublimest sacrifice. Beside the Crib sits Mary, Mother of the most beautiful love, holding in her own the small, tender hands of Jesus. Her gracious countenance is lighted with the fire of heavenly joy and the purest love. Her gentle eyes beam with the maternal happiness of her heart and full fervor of her spotless soul. Her look, however, also expresses a deep melancholy, and, as she raises the hands of her Child to her lips and impresses on them her first mother's kiss, tears expressive of the first maternal sorrow of the Queen of Martyrs trickle down on the divine hands, which are to accomplish at such a bloody price the salvation of mankind. With the first maternal grief of her heart, Mary consecrates her Child to her God, who demands this sacrifice of her, and to the world, which He is to save.

When mothers enroll their children in the Association of the Holy Childhood, they should do so with Mary's strong self-sacrificing courage. It is not merely a question of the savings of your dear children, which, instead of spending, they place as a Christmas gift in the little hands of Our Infant Savior to ransom pagan children for heaven. These little offerings may also prove to be the first seeds of what is later to be the vocation of your daughter or son, who may one day come to you and say:

"Mother, my Savior and my heart leave me no rest. Please let me join the missions. I must save souls for Jesus and for heaven."

Even with this prospect before you, kiss the little hands of your children, when, by their little donations, they practice for the great labor of charity in the vineyard of the Lord. And when the day of parting comes, even though this day breaks as gloomy for you as the first Good Friday dawned for Mary, place yourself with unflinching heart under the cross of sacrifice which the Divine Mercy has fashioned with your co-operation. It is a missionary work which you have done—a work which one may, in all humility, compare with the motherly sorrow and sacrifice of Mary. Immortal souls will be saved through your heroic sacrifice. God will give you the necessary strength for the sacrifice, since He never allows Himself to be outdone in generosity by man.

Mission Scenes

I. THE DEPARTURE OF MISSIONARIES

 HE path of the apostle is the path of the Savior — the path which He first has trodden. The great attraction of this path does not consist in any alluring, passing beauty which floods the monotonous course of daily life with golden sunshine and shimmering hues. Nor does it consist in the pleasant prospect of a future of wonderful brilliance. What conducts the true disciple of Christ to new perspectives, and bears him aloft to enjoy the air and peace of heaven, is the sturdy nobility of soul which struggles upwards along the path of duties fulfilled. This is the path along which Our Divine Master leads His disciples.

Long peaceful years of quiet preparation were passed in silence in the humble house of Nazareth. Very quickly these years glide by, as the Boy Jesus devoutly opens the scrolls of Holy Writ, and in silent seclusion ponders over their divine meaning. Again and again He returns to the holy writings to search into their wisdom and to use them in His prayers. The fleeting years fill the Boy with wisdom as He grows in grace and fulfils the part assigned to Him. "Et erat subditus

illis" (He was subject to them): He labors obediently in the workshop of Joseph.

And now a still greater stillness descends on the house at Nazareth. He around whom all its life had revolved—He in whom all its love had been centered—goes forth to the Jordan. All the thoughts of Mary follow Him, while tears flood her maternal eyes. But she does not hurry forth to seek Him now as formerly when she lost Him in Jerusalem. She will indeed find Him again on the way to Calvary, only again to lose Him. He has entered on the path decreed by His heavenly Father.

Out in the desert the Jordan is the silent witness of the solemn scene when the Heavenly Father sends His only-begotten Son forth to accomplish our salvation. The Son of God advances into the rising waves of the river, and urges St. John to baptize Him and so consecrate Him for His work as our Redeemer. As Jesus undertakes His predestined office, heaven opens, the Holy Ghost descends, and the voice of the Eternal Father announces: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." But, before Our Savior takes the first step along the stony, steep road which is to end in our redemption, He wishes to inhale the strength of holy silence in the desert about the Jordan. How gladly would this river have animated every stone with its waters to honor its Creator who tarries on its banks! The scorching rays of the sun, however, lick up greedily

every drop of moisture which kindly night has deposited on rock or sand. Higher mounts the sun, driving away the shadows of early morn and pouring a flood of light over the whole desert. Attracted by the restless waves in the winding river-bed, our gaze extends further to penetrate to infinity. On the horizon the refined gold of earth mingles with the bright glory of heaven, and our longing eyes mount upwards through the clear blue; and, as the sun with its bright golden veil inclines to the earth in royal majesty, it lays devoutly in the deep-blue shadows behind each fiery rock a piece of heaven for those who voluntarily fare forth into the desert to seek heavenly peace in seclusion from the world and union with God. Forty times the sun arises and treads its golden path across the sky, bringing the peace of God to Our Savior's soul—that unfathomable, incomprehensible peace of union with the Father, that peace which arose from the most perfect harmony between the dear will of the Father and the joyful obedience of the Son. What a solemn mystery enshrouds this occasion when the only-begotten Son of God enters on the mission of His Heavenly Father! Forty times the sun sinks into the shadows of the night, and the solitude about the Jordan is enveloped in the mantle of mourning, and all the glory of the day disappears. The night of the passion, the terror of death, appear as heralds of that rough path which was to conduct Our Savior over mountains of physical exertion and into bottomless pits of sorrow before

our redemption was achieved. And where will this path end? The sun stands high in the heavens, and yet is enveloped in an impenetrable darkness, when a loud and solemn cry is heard from the Cross: "It is consummated!"

The ceremony of sending forth missionaries, as practiced in all mission houses, has drawn more than one feature from this picture of Our Savior's life. No one who has once participated in this solemnity can ever forget the gripping beauty of this feast of consecration and farewell. During my long journey of visitation I had seen the great need of extending aid to the pagan missions, and had myself experienced the unspeakable trials and privations of the missionaries. In the summer of 1912, while I was still powerfully affected by these experiences, it was my great consolation to witness the sending out of a large number of missionaries, who gladly hurried forth to assist their hard-worked brethren and to bring salvation to the unfortunate heathen.

The church ceremony begins with solemn chant—one of those great anthems full of holy longing which accords well with the inspired preparation of the missionaries for their task of helping and saving. "O rex gentium—O King of the Gentiles, who long for Thee, come and save man whom Thou hast formed from the dust!"

Like a joyous morning greeting, when the first rays of the sun send their liquid gold through the purple clouds, the soft tones of the organ

send forth a golden glow of charity which gratefully celebrates its good fortune, its holy enthusiasm, and its heartfelt courage, and sends forth peace, salvation, and love to those hapless pagans who have heard these words of the prophet with joyful hope. The whole moving spirit of the function is expressed in this first anthem. Tears start forth in the eyes of the missionaries, showing their heartfelt gratitude to God for making them the instruments of His merciful love. These tears are a silent testimony to fulfilled longings and an impatient love which would now hasten to the scene of its holy activity; it is the first greeting of those unfortunate ones towards whom the divine benevolence and the missionaries' love are now directed.

During the singing, the pagan lands seem to open to receive God's messengers with the customary demonstrations of respect. The humble negroes greet them as their saviors in their whirling dances. High-sounding trills rise above the noisy song of the men, and express the great joy of the usually inexpressive womenfolk. The dignity of man has been brought home to these people, together with the freedom of the children of God. With sweet grace and solemn dignity the children of the East bend slowly until their foreheads touch the ground. Yes, the ambassadors of God have come to conduct you to your King—the eternal, invisible King—so that you all may receive in

His kingdom heavenly grace, eternal glory, and life everlasting.

A moving devotion fills the aisles of the church, and, with the sweet clouds of incense, every heart inhales the merciful providence of our Divine Redeemer, whose last will is now solemnly chanted by the deacon, as His trustee. Why do these words of Our Savior now penetrate with such tender force to our beating hearts? They have sounded so often before in our ears and knocked at our hearts, but only now have they been fully comprehended. It required the solemn power of this occasion to develop the full import of Our Savior's words, the full strength of His love, the irresistible force of His divine will, and the anxiety of His tender Heart. With an altogether unusual fervor, the choir to-day answers "*Gloria tibi, Domini,*" (Glory be to Thee, O Lord) to the announcing of the Gospel: "*Sequentia Sancti Evangelii secundum Marcum*" (Mark xvi, 15-20). It seems as if they would fain join in the *Gloria* which the angels sing to the Eternal Creator, and in which they express their longing that God would be honored through the conversion of the heathen who are now sunk in sin, and that all peoples may be brought to add their voices to the never-ceasing praises of the heavenly choir.

The very words of Our Savior are first chanted: "At that time Jesus spoke to His disciples: Go ye into the whole world, and

preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned" (Mark xvi, 15—16). The Divine Savior has announced His program of salvation for the whole world. This program, which ordains all pagandom for redemption, should serve for Catholics as a document of His all-merciful love and as a clear command to all His true followers to assist in the propagation of His desire to save all mankind. We may feel ourselves too weak to accomplish this great task which Our Savior entrusts to us weak mortals, and yet, when laden with God's holy graces, we find the strength to go forth and distribute His saving blessings throughout the world.

The Abbot now summons the priests chosen for the missions to the steps of the altar so that they may draw strength, the spirit of sacrifice, and divine charity from the tabernacle. Their divine commission, however, is not given them until certain solemn preliminaries are clearly settled. The Abbot first questions the missionaries: "Chosen Sons, what is the faith which you have resolved to propagate?" The missionaries recite the Apostles' Creed—that ancient chain which links them with the Apostles and Christ Himself. But then follows a question so grave and terrifying that the breathless listeners feel their hearts throb: "Are you ready to die for this Catholic Faith of yours?" Quietly and

firmly, with deep emotion in their voices but with shining eyes, the missionaries reply: "We are ready, but assist us, we beseech you, with your prayers that we remain steadfast and bring forth fruit in patience."

However heroic these promises, the Abbot is not yet satisfied with their declared spirit of sacrifice. He is recalling perhaps the words of the Apostle: "If I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

"Sons, what are your sacrificial gifts?" he asks.

The missionaries declare with the Apostle: "Silver and gold I have not; but what I have, that I give to Thee: my heart and my body, all my powers and actions, my life and my soul." As a proof that this is their most holy desire, the missionaries renew the vows of their order whereby years before they consecrated themselves solemnly to God.

Nothing more is required; nothing more can be asked of those who have given all. The Abbot declares himself satisfied, and, in a glorious Preface, invokes the blessing of God on the chosen candidates for the divine work of saving souls: "Do Thou, eternal High-priest, make them holy, guiltless, and immaculate. Do Thou, O Divine Shepherd, instruct them as pastors of Thy flock, so that they may curb the wild passions of the unbelievers, may cure sick bodies,

and raise up prostrate souls . . . Precede them, O Eternal Light, so that they may walk in the light, and, united with a host released from the bonds of darkness, may attain at last to Thy throne which beams with light imperishable."

The joy of their hearts mounts to the cheeks of the missionaries, which flush with suppressed enthusiasm. They kneel there with their heads bowed in humble recognition of human weakness which could never bear the burden of their divine mission but for the strengthening power of divine grace. They now raise their heads and reveal eyes sparkling with divine confidence, with a profound love of God and the pastoral spirit of sacrifice. They are now stretched on the missionary cross which the Abbot raises on high. With beaming joy and holy emotion they ascend the altar-steps and imprint a kiss of heartfelt gratitude on the cross that is henceforth to adorn their breast, and enchain their hearts to its holy purposes. With this kiss their silent tears are mingled, expressing to their Savior the emotions of their souls which their lips must leave unsaid.

Such was the kiss that the Crusaders formerly imprinted on the symbol of their redemption and of their holy faith when they received it from the hand of the priest and fastened it to their soldier's mantle before departing for the Holy Land to fight for the liberation of the

Sacred Places from the hands of the unbeliever. The missionaries are departing on a crusade against the Prince of Darkness, who is holding the holy land of souls in the gloomy thralldom of unbelief and sin.

The Abbot, whose fatherly heart will not allow him to dismiss his sons without a warm word of farewell, touches on these thoughts.

“The cross which you have taken is your field-badge. Christ, your Divine Banner-bearer, holds it on high, so that all His trusty soldiers may rally from afar around the divine standard. It is inscribed all over with the mercy of God, and the fidelity of Our Savior—inscribed with the Blood of Our Savior and our God. And, when you read and study the inscription on the Cross, it speaks only of love, of an immeasurable love, a love as strong as death, the eternal love of the Father for His creatures. ‘God has so loved the world that He sacrificed His only-begotten Son.’ The Cross proclaims the Savior’s love in all the languages that love understands, proclaiming aloud the love of the Son of God who shed His Blood to redeem our souls.

“Ponder for a moment on the sacred characters in which this message is written—the deep cuts of the scourges, the bloody wounds, the torn flesh, the pierced forehead—and then estimate the price which the Son of God had to pay for the redemption of man. Look at the Cross, and you can then appraise the value of a

single immortal soul. If you realize that the Cross was the ransom demanded by the all-just Father, your vocation will attain such sublimity in your eyes that your life will daily take on a new magnanimity until it is finally brought into complete harmony with the all-embracing will of God. The Cross is the record of the price which Jesus paid for our souls. So high a price as this you cannot give, nor are you asked to give. What Christ asks of you, what you should give, and what you have promised to give, is your whole strength and your whole life. Do you think that this sacrifice is excessive, when you look at your Savior on the Cross? Your Savior has accepted your sacrifice and enrolled you among His followers.

"The military oath which you have taken is the oath of fidelity. Press, therefore, your missionary cross to your breast, and renew again and again your promise to the heavenly King to render Him fidelity for fidelity, love for love, and life for life.

"The all-conquering Cross is leading you forth on a glorious crusade to wage heroic battle and win the victory for the Church of Christ and the Kingdom of God. God's heroic sons formerly planted the Cross in our land, and from this Cross God's blessings streamed down on us. What bearer of the Cross has displayed greater intrepidity than St. Boniface? A son of St. Benedict, he was one of our spiritual

forbears, and raised all his disciples to the knighthood of the Cross. Prove yourselves worthy sons of your father, the heroic offspring of illustrious ancestry! Press forward and extend the boundaries of God's kingdom, erecting the Cross as the mark of your new conquests. Wherever you plant this Cross, is a Holy Land, the country of God, conquered for Christ. The Cross with its blessings will also extend the frontiers of civilization, and through your efforts new lands will be thus opened to the saving currents of grace. Where heretofore a *terra invia et inaquosa* (a pathless, waterless desert) extended, a promised land will bloom, in which earthly happiness and peace will take deep root, and the fruits of virtue and magnanimity will ripen for heaven. What a glorious crusade! How worthy it is of a knightly race, trained for God's fight in the *Schola servitii Domini* (training-school of the Lord), as St. Benedict described his Order. In spiritual tournaments you have been long prepared for the fight, and you have long wished for this day. Well, the day of battle is now here.

"With the gentle strength of the Cross and the invigorating blessings and spiritual power which emanate from it, you are now fully armed for the fight. The Cross is your battle-sword. You will need this sword to cut through the iron chains which bind souls to sin and the power of hell. Do not imagine that hell will

yield up the world, which it regards as its own property, without the bitterest struggle. The Prince of Hell has proclaimed himself also the Prince of the World, although rightfully the world and all men belong to God. Mankind must be won completely back to its proper allegiance.

“Hell has already been compelled to surrender much of its stolen territory to the advancing Cross. Every hand-breadth has indeed been recovered only after a fierce struggle—often at a bloody cost, always after strenuous effort, and never without the exercise of great patience and sublime love. The Cross has conquered, for it is the sword on which God has inscribed the motto: ‘Confidite: ego vici mundum’ (Have confidence, for I have conquered the world).

“The holy obedience to God, which nailed the Redeemer to the Cross, dissolved the huge kingdom of disobedience which, lying in slavery, has therefore cried out to God: ‘Non serviam’ (I shall not serve). Deceived by the shameful freedom of licentious passions, this kingdom had mocked at the bright freedom of the children of God. But, although the kingdom of disobedience has been dissolved, its scattered members have not yet been collected into the kingdom of obedience to the Cross. To accomplish this, a way must be prepared by which the Cross may enter into the hearts of these scattered brethren, and expel all hostility from souls which have

hitherto known only of a lord who excluded them from the eternal light and confined them in the prison of spiritual darkness. The light which brings knowledge to a soul long surrounded with the darkness of sin may smart at first. But its beams will pour the light of life and heavenly grace into the wounds which the soul still bears as souvenirs of its fight for freedom. Innocent and childlike hearts will offer a ready and open passage through which divine love may enter. Sinners will draw near humiliated when they have once been taught to understand the dripping wounds of Christ Crucified. The dying, terrified with the fear of death, will feel the Cross lighten up their heart's darkness, a darkness more sinister and disquieting than the gloomy terrors of death itself.

“*Salus, vita et resurrectio*’ (salvation, life, and resurrection)—you hold these in your hands. You bring salvation for those who, with childlike confidence, cling to the Cross which you hold out to them as a saving plank in the deluge of the world. You bring life to those who would look on the Cross, when, like Moses, you erect the Tree of Life among the people who must otherwise have perished from the bite of the serpent of hell. You also bring resurrection, for the Cross is the mighty lever whereby you can raise heathen to the gate of heaven. With the Cross, the Son of God stormed heaven, and beat so powerfully on its closed gates that they were fain to

open. Thousands will therefore acclaim the shining Cross when they see it in your hands, for it signifies resurrection into heaven and eternity. They will thus be won for God—won by you, His champions, through the power of the Cross.

“‘O Cross, my only hope, I greet thee!’ You must embrace the Cross with unwavering confidence. It is the weapon which will bring you victory in God’s fight. Prepare yourselves to fight for the cause of God and the salvation of immortal souls.

“With deep emotion you have kissed your missionary cross which will bring you the success you desire in saving souls. Kiss it now once more, and impress the kiss of rock-like confidence and self-denying love on the wounded heart of Our Savior on the Cross. In this you will find strength to persevere to the end. Remember you are weak men, and this is a godly strife. You are mere flesh and blood, and hell is ranged against you. You will take up your lonely station, a few brethren, and will be surrounded by the oppressed, who will invoke your aid and ask you to save them. Will your strength and courage suffice in this crisis? If you should grow tired from incessant work; if hell should threaten you and surround you with dangers until you feel you must give way, fly to the Cross for refuge, at its foot seek shelter against the storms of hell, and lie down beneath it for your eternal rest when your last task is done.

“It is pleasant for the laborer, after enduring the burning rays of the harvest sun on his limbs, to retire to the cool shade of a tree and relieve his tired body by a brief rest. But what if there be no tree, not even a bush in sight? What if one is forced to shelter one’s burning head under a heap of sheaves until the sultriness threatens one with suffocation? No true rest is this. Similarly, the spirit which has worked itself to fatigue in the quest of its ideals can find no rest in the follies of the world or in the glittering toys which the world offers it. Your Savior calls you to the Cross. ‘Come to Me, all ye that labor and are heavily burdened, and I will refresh you.’ You will need this refreshment, since the life of the missionary is a life of sacrifice, and the harvesting of souls is a heavy, burning task. This you will learn by experience. When this moment of weariness comes, think of this parting hour when you went forth from the spiritual peace of the monastery, and of the message which I have given you. Repair to the Cross, and seek repose under its divine shade. A soothing balsam trickles down from the Cross into the wearied soul. The strength of Our Savior, which did not give way under the burden of the whole world, will again communicate to your will its holy inspiration; Our Savior’s love will make you as strong as death. Under the parching rays of the tropical sun, your valiant hopes are apt to melt like wax, when not even a single shoot appears to reward your years of patience and

labors. In the Cross, however, 'you will find rest for your souls,' and, with undisturbed confidence in God, will proceed with your work—however hopeless it appears—as long as it pleases Our Savior that you continue. It would be no different if your sphere of activity were confined to the icy polar regions. A similar indifference to your ardent love would soon cool your zeal in this frosty atmosphere. Down from the Cross come the inspiring words: 'I have so loved the world.' Our Savior shows you His Sacred Heart from which the warm Blood once poured, and still pours. A loving beam from this Heart will suffuse your soul, and rekindle in it its former fidelity.

"Missionary work is one of the greatest ideals that this world holds. It is God's work, a labor for souls, a work of salvation, a most pure act of divine worship instituted by the Incarnate Son of God Himself. Missionary work formed the warp and woof of Our Savior's life; missionary work was the great culmination of all His activities. But, however high the ideal and glorious the task, we remain men of flesh and blood. The spiritual trials which each of us must meet, and the dangers which every soul must encounter, accompany the missionary to the mission field. And, just as the sun is often hidden by the black mountains of clouds, the fairest ideal may be dimmed by the mounting difficulties which must be overcome by every soul that would

scale the heights of heaven. The moment may even come when, through human weakness or frailty, you are tempted to abandon your greatest ideals. At such a moment fly to the Cross for refuge. There hangs the Fruit of Life, full of supernatural strength and rich in blessings—a heavenly fruit which will infuse the joy of heaven into your weary souls, a divine fruit which will protect you from the stain of sin. There hangs God Himself, who first awakened the divine ideal in your hearts. Day after day plant the Tree of Life in the Holy Mass; day after day pluck the fruits of the Cross in Holy Communion—the divine life, perfect charity, and strengthening grace.

“In the joyous enthusiasm of your youth and the strong conviction of your manhood, while your faith ennobles your work, hold firmly to your missionary cross. One day your hands will tremble, and will have scarcely strength to grasp the cross which they now wield mightily as a crusader’s sword. Our Savior is then summoning you to the last combat. The fight will soon be over, and, before the humble little wooden cross of perhaps merely two crossed boughs is set up on a lonely mound, you will have returned your missionary cross to your Divine King with the words: ‘I have fallen on the field of honor, holding in my hand the sword Thou gavest me.’ How glorious then will be your lot! The beating tropical rains and the desert sand will soon obliterate

your name from the little wooden cross which marks your grave, but your spiritual children, to whom you gave this cross as the symbol of their salvation, will journey thither, kneel beside the graves of those who gave them the cross as their support in this life and their pilgrim's staff to heaven. They will pray for you and constantly renew their love and their gratitude. Beside them will kneel their children and their children's children, who will all inherit the memory of your names and link them with the blessing of the Cross, which constitutes their happiness. But there is One who has inscribed your name indelibly on a glorious page of the Book of Life—your Savior, for whom you have fought and striven and fallen in the hot fight for the salvation of souls. He also will find your lonely grave when He summons friend and foe for the last awful review. Your body, which has labored and suffered and perished under the Cross, will then receive its reward—the everlasting reward which God Our Savior reserves for His faithful disciples.

“Seek refuge, therefore, in the blessings of the Cross. We who are left behind will also stand in its shadow, and thus remain united with you—united in our holy fidelity to the holy Faith which you preach fearlessly for the salvation of pagans; united in the strength of our charity which will never forget you, but will bring us to the foot of the Cross to pray for you and the work which you have voluntarily undertaken, and to help you

whenever your call for help reaches us from overseas; united in our secure hope that this Cross will one day re-unite us all, since it stands erect in heaven as the symbol of salvation and beckons us to heaven on the conclusion of our battle on earth. On, then, to the Crusade! 'Vexilla regis prodeunt!' The royal standard of the Cross advances! On to victory and the triumph of the Cross!"

Like an inspiring fanfare of trumpets or a majestic triumphal march, the full tones of the organ rise to heaven, and swell through the aisles of the church in sustained jubilee. In solemn Benediction the Abbot implores the blessing of heaven and the Cross on the crusaders and all those who support them with their prayers.

The moving function is now at an end. Like the noise of battle, the tones of the organ again resound in solemn majesty, filling every corner of the church and penetrating into every heart. In solemn silence, the consecrated warriors of Christ file out of the church, prepared for the holy war. As their coat-of-arms and trophy of victory, the cross shines on their breasts. In similar fashion the Chosen People must have carried the Ark of the Covenant around the walls of Jericho, whose rocky foundations had previously withstood the assault of the army of God. There was a blare of trumpets, the Ark draws near, and with a crash like thunder the mighty bulwarks of the ungodly city fall to the

ground. How fortunate are those who, under the standard of the Cross, join in the assaults on the strongholds of hell! Many a fortress will fall, and open its gates to the Son of God; many a kingdom will submit and accept the Lord of Glory as its sovereign; many a soul—and a single soul outweighs in value kingdoms and worlds—will find rest under the shadow of the Cross.

The ecclesiastical ceremonies are followed by a function in which the missionary idea is visibly represented, thereby confirming the deep impressions and emotions already created in our souls. This function unites the whole community of the monastery and their friends and patrons who desire to share in the overflowing joy of the young missionaries. We are now surrounded by the warm atmosphere of missionary enthusiasm, which breathes from every hymn and every instrument. It resembles some apostolic fire in which we catch glimpses of living pictures. They bring before our eyes the Apostle of the Gentiles and his works. Silent forms in their ancient garb conduct us back to the cradle of Christianity, and tell us of the love and suffering of the apostles more eloquently than any set sermon, and give us a more glorious and clear picture of heroic effort and joyful success than the most entrancing description. What thoughts these pictures must awaken in the breasts of the young apostles, and in the breasts of those who watch their departure with mingled feelings of

hope and longing! One of the missionaries raises a little the veil under which his heart concealed its full rapture at the final attainment of its youthful dreams after such earnest efforts. He expresses his gratitude towards all those who helped him towards his vocation, and finally admitted him to his holy calling. He then makes a heartfelt appeal for the powerful aid of their prayers, especially in connection with the missionary work before him. His words establish a deep sympathy between him and his hearers. Many a moist eye follows the young speaker as, with lowered head, he rejoins the ranks of his brethren whose faces betray an unselfish envy at his earlier call. How gladly would they exchange places or depart together with him! Just as a precious ancient painting, on which the dust of ages has lain and whose gloss the passing years have dulled, recovers its vanished magical fire at the touch of the expert's hand, missionary enthusiasm bursts forth into bright flame in all their hearts. What has been the daily purpose of their earnest striving, is now strengthened tenfold. Only one thing can now hold it in check—holy obedience.

In the sparkling eyes of the young clerics shines the answer to the inspired appeal of the young missionary, who a few years before was one of their number, joined in their merry games, and competed with them for the prize of knowledge. These sparkling eyes betray the secret of

their hearts: "I shall one day stand where you now stand, and I shall then express myself as you have done to-day. The same longing fills my breast as beats in yours. One day your joy will be mine when, raised to the knighthood, I shall join the elite of the divine army and may depart for the holy war."

The Abbot proceeds to dispel their fantastic dreams which are already dwelling on the plans of a little missionary church, thinking how its slender walls can, with still more slender resources, be made to accommodate the hundreds of pagans who will yield before the first onslaught of their love. Fancy builds so rapidly and accomplishes results so easily! The Abbot demolishes this house of cards with a single blow, and dispels their sweet dream of proud success. Reading the thoughts of enthusiastic youth and wishing to give his spiritual sons a surer and safer foundation to build on, he quotes Our Savior's words in the day's Gospel¹ to the young missionaries and those who indulged in flights of fancy into the future:

"'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you.' Such are the words of Our Savior Himself and I know no better parting advice to give you.

"It is now two months since I returned to European soil. During my long travels through the missionary lands of the farthest East and in the

¹ Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost.

remotest corners of Africa, I have visited many a miserable hut in which the missionary shared with me his wretched meal and narrow room. I considered myself lucky to be allowed to share in his privations. Many a needy church have I seen with ceiling so low that I had to stoop to avoid the unplanned rafters—a church with all the naked poverty of the Stable of Bethlehem. I have met many missionaries who had grave difficulties to contend with daily, but fulfilled their duties with manly courage and fidelity. I could observe how privations and sacrifices had dug deep furrows in their open brows, and how malignant plagues had shattered many a frame in the full bloom of youth. In these and many other cases I have seen how many disappointments and trials, how much self-denial and suffering, work in the vineyard entails, but I have never yet discovered a gloomy missionary. They have all clung with joyful confidence to the word of Our Savior: ‘Seek ye first the Kingdom of God.’ This is also your first and only task: to seek the Kingdom of God, to see that it grows and extends, that it and its justice sink into men’s souls and attract them to their salvation. It is God’s task to keep the word He has given, and He has promised that all else will be given you in abundance.

“The Savior, who has called you and sent you into His vineyard to work for Him, will not forget you. He will provide for you, who has taught

us all to pray: 'Our Father who art in heaven . . . give us this day our daily bread.' He will find noble, self-sacrificing hearts and open, charitable hands through which He will provide for your necessities. In such loving hearts He will implant the determination to promote God's Kingdom with all their strength and according to their means. To them, as to you, He says: 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His justice.' He who is all-kind and deposits His blessed gifts in helping hands will see that these hands distribute them for the promotion of His honor, the glorification of His name, and the propagation of the kingdom of grace.

"The divine wisdom and mercy has so distributed its tasks among the faithful that the missionaries may not be subjected to all the anxieties and cares, while the faithful in general are deprived of the consolation which comes of the certainty that they are sharing in the blessed conquests made by the missionaries for heaven. Through the aid of the faithful these conquests are effected. All who have come here to-day to foster their missionary enthusiasm by witnessing your heroic faith and spirit of self-sacrifice—your parents, who have offered you as a sacrifice to God; your brothers and sisters, who are so proud of their brother's heroism; your benefactors, who have made possible this culmination of your dreams—all these have hearts which beat with a love like yours for the glory of God, the

extension of the Holy Church and the salvation of souls. Thousands and hundreds of thousands of other inspired hearts beat faster whenever the word 'missions' is mentioned. God can find all these whenever He needs their assistance for His work. They will all experience the gratitude of God, who will reward them for every act of charity and self-sacrifice.

"Depart, then, in God's name for your work! We shall all do what God asks of us, and He will do His part."

Joy, peace, and love permeated the whole function. Serious considerations were intermingled with joyful emotions, but even the former were garbed in the attractive dress of kindness before they could be allowed to intrude on this parting celebration. Heartfelt sincerity and joyous longing were the keynote of the final hymn, which expressed the jubilant enthusiasm of the young missionaries, and, as if by magic, transported the hearts of all present to far-away lands.

Evening with its mysterious silence has drawn nigh to hear the last verse of the gracious hymn with its spirit of self-oblation, its holy desires, and hallowed longings. The western sky, wreathed in golden smiles, transfigures the inspired countenances of the departing guests as they wend their way homewards. It is one of those evenings which seem to sink down quietly and devoutly at the feet of Our Savior and to

deposit a piece of heaven behind each solemnly illuminated stone. The missionaries return to the monastery, harboring profound thoughts in their hearts, but pause to send a greeting to the sinking sun and the great beloved pagan world. The choir members in blessed melancholy seek out their peaceful cells, where they must await their commissions. None of them cares for the deep-blue shadows, broken by golden sun-lit pillars wherever something rises to an eminence above the earth. Their souls are thrilled with the gentle whisper which they have caught of heavenly bliss. "Animam salvasti, tuam praedestinasti." These words sound in their hearts like the peaceful echo and the urgent command of a heavenly voice. "Save a soul, and you have established for your own a claim to heaven." Truly, heaven shines on us from every soul which we have assisted to know God and love Him, and our own souls throw back this reflection full of heavenly bliss and a promise of heavenly reward.

II. THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Heroic souls grow stronger and purer when they are tempered by the dispositions of God and heaven-sent trials. The more thickly fly the sparks under the hammer swung by the hand of God, the more perfectly are their lives brought to conform to the lives of the saints. But, where the hand of fate falls heavily on a heart which,

miserable and weak in itself, clings to the trifles of the passing hour, this heart cannot withstand the blow, and all its hopes of happiness are dispelled.

There are narrow souls, who desire only to quaff pleasure in deep draughts, and can see no bright side to misfortune or mourning. This is because they never try to discover the hand of God which withdraws the beaker of joy from their lips. According to their view, it is evil spirits alone which interfere with life's happiness, expel content, and torture the soul to death.

Even in such souls, however, a true spiritual life can take root after the oppressive weight of idle interests and distracting joys has been removed. Arm in arm through the world walk complaining sorrow and sad poverty, heartless enmity and mischievous hate, bitter suffering and oppressive mourning, and every soul draws back in alarm when one of these spirits grasps him and insists on accompanying him. It seems to be a kind of spiritual dance of death similar to those which are depicted so frequently in the vestibules of churches. Everything assumes a hard, repulsive appearance, and is enshrouded in black raiment, when we regard sorrow and unkindness with purely human eyes.

Very frequently these spirits strive to entice us into their deadly ranks, and press down on our souls until they are submerged in the earth and earthly grief. Pure, noble idealism, however, will

preserve the life-warmth of the heart, and relieve the soul of the ban of misfortune, even though the body is being hounded to death by the demons of evil.

Above on the mountain sits the Savior of the World. Crowding around Him are His disciples, who do not allow a single word from His divine lips to escape them. His words also reach to the crowd, whose eyes are fixed expectantly on their Master. In dense ranks they stand, facing the wondrous Prophet and reading the saving words from the movement of His lips. All have followed Him into the desert, and all need consolation and strength, kindness and mercy, enlightenment and patience.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit," He begins, and, like a ray of heavenly light, His words sink into their listening hearts. "Blessed are the meek; blessed are they that mourn; blessed are they that hunger; blessed are the merciful; blessed are the clean of heart; blessed are the peacemakers, and blessed are they that suffer persecution."

A divine light shines in the eyes of Jesus, while tears of emotion flood the eyes of His hearers. Such a discourse they had never heard before, and yet it is so clear and intelligible to all hearts which have struggled with misfortune and sin. Many timidly lower their eyes, for they dare not look up at the Master until the tumult in their hearts has subsided. Finally they steal a glance at Him who speaks such words of in-

terior peace. Divinely kind, the eye of the Master seeks out the sinner in the crowd, and hot tears dissolve the ice which had enveloped his heart. Vain hatred of an enemy had possessed him, but his hatred is dispelled by the words: "Blessed are the peacemakers." A tender sweetness suffuses the faces of the maidens, and childlike hearts beat in silvery accord with Jesus as He declares: "Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God." They look up, and see their God in the Divine Master, whose words of sweetness have penetrated their hearts.

The Master's words have an irresistible effect on the hearts of His disciples. Overcome by the silent emotion which has settled on the whole gathering, they repeat to themselves His words: "Blessed are the poor in spirit." Their whole souls exult in the Savior; they have forsaken all to follow Him. What will be their reward? He has indeed just said: "Theirs is the kingdom of heaven." All, however, is not yet clear to them. Blessed are they that suffer persecution? They are ready to engage in stern battle for their beloved Master; they are ready to defend Him with the sword. A little later they will understand this sentence fully. They will then preach these Beatitudes to others. It is indeed for this reason that the Master has assembled them now around Him, so that no syllable shall escape them. They will summon the poor, the meek, and the persecuted to share in the purest happiness and

the most joyful jubilee. And, following their example, the apostles of all ages will carry Our Savior's Beatitudes to the end of the earth, wherever the poor and piteous, the oppressed and hated of mankind are sunk in sorrow and despair. They will bring consolation to all men of goodwill, and point out to them the path to heaven.

The missionary has gone forth among the heathen, accompanied by Our Savior's compassion. The adult natives cannot understand his coming, but the little ones comprehend it more quickly, for they feel themselves drawn irresistibly to the children's friend. The child's heart learns very quickly the language of love, and the little gifts which satisfy childish desires fill it with ecstasy. "Jesus went about doing good," and so attracted to Himself the multitude with whom He wished to break the Bread of Life. "Do good!" such is the lesson that every missionary must draw from the study of Our Savior's life, and the quest for souls must be conducted along the same lines as the Master's. Souls must be caught in the net of love. The missionary must ever strive to do good, to be all things to all men, and thus win them for Christ. He binds the wounds of the injured, and gives medicine to the sick; he takes a friendly part in the amusements of his flock, and accompanies the laborers to the fields; he takes an interest in the success of the crops and in all their undertakings. In this manner he gradually draws close to the people,

and can occasionally speak to them of Our Savior's message. Whether they will comprehend this message or not, rests with God.

I. Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit, for Theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven

What a contrast between poverty and the kingdom of heaven! Who shall solve this riddle?

The negro tribes are so extremely poor that they regard even the needy missionary as rich beyond measure because he possesses a few clothes and a change of linen. Their poverty, however, is accompanied by frugality and a contentment that looks untroubled to the future. These qualities are of inestimable value to these poor negroes, and yet they lead only too often to bitter disappointment. Hunger and need, the regular companions of improvident content, overtake these wretched people, coming unexpected and unwelcome. In their wake follow weeping and sorrow and death. The poor people bear all these afflictions as if in a stupefying trance; even in their greatest misfortunes, they cannot lift up their souls above the earth. There is thus a poverty of the soul, corresponding to material poverty. Self-content and ignorance cannot conceive the transfiguration of the repulsive form of poverty into a heavenly figure. With its most fearful and gloomy features emphasized, poverty appears among the negroes, and settles with the coldness

of death in their souls, which, immersed in a stupid torpor, cannot shake themselves free from the trammels of earth. Truly poor are they, for no elevating thought beckons to them in their spiritual trials, reminding them of heaven, where all tears shall be dried and all sorrow and mourning end.

Suddenly they hear of the kingdom of heaven in a strange language, which declares that the poor are blessed. He who speaks this new language is the "father" whom they have come to know and to love, for he has labored so earnestly for their welfare. Their misery becomes enveloped in a bright haze as they hear his words, although the glimmer is too weak at first to brighten up their lives and transfigure their poverty. Among the very backward races much time will be required before this spark can burst into bright flame, and the light of heaven beam forth and gild the abject depths of their poverty.

The old Christians of Corea discovered with astonishing rapidity the mysterious worth of poverty. Since the founding of the Church in Corea, its persecutors have adopted the most savage methods to extirpate the very name of Christianity. This campaign continued for a whole century. After the last great persecution in 1866, during which two thousand Christians and all the missionaries won martyrs' crowns, the blind hatred of the persecutors seemed to wane, as the futility of the bloody warfare began to dawn on

their minds. The persecution ceased, but the surviving Christians had lost all their standing, their property, and their homes. They had fled to the pathless valleys of the mountains, where, amid frightful privations, they strove to prolong their lives until better days should come. As these days, however, were slow in dawning, the woody ravines became their home, and necessity their protecting roof. There they remained, living martyrs of the persecuted Church Militant, and bequeathed the spirit of holy poverty to their children. Many of them were the offspring of martyrs; many had, in their younger days, received their father's torn body from the rack and dutifully consigned it to the grave; many had themselves languished in prison. Whole towns of Christians have been formed in this manner in the lonely wilderness, and have gladly embraced exile, satisfied because with great sacrifices they could thus preserve their Faith. With unrelenting labor they can eke out from the stony soil of the mountains the necessities of life. They ask for nothing more, since they have their priest who shares their penury with them. In these towns, the soft hands of noble wives learned to use the hoe. Children, whose earliest days had been spent joyfully at the country-seats of their forefathers, were taught by their mothers to endure want and suffering, while their faces reflected the blessed peace which they also inherited from her. This peace in turn was the reflection of the noble repose with which her spouse had surrendered his

soul to the "King of Heaven" after the most refined tortures. Into the purple of their suffering has thus been woven the following motto in heavenly gold: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Like an aged tree whose withered branches have been blown away by the sharp wind from the east, the Corean nobility in these families sent out new shoots and vigorous branches which extended into eternity and blossomed with heavenly garlands.

The flock of our little monastery at Seoul includes one of these heroic characters. Though supporting himself laboriously, he retains all of his splendid bearing, and is every inch a king. Although he formerly enjoyed an enviable position in society, he overcomes with his heroic courage the grinding poverty, which would crush his dignity beneath the burden of the stone-filled *tschike*.¹ One thought gives him strength to endure the miseries of want, suspicion, and obscure poverty: "I am suffering for my Faith, for my God, for a heavenly kingdom."

Poverty, elsewhere so repulsive, appears here in golden ornaments and wanders from door to door, smiling gently, and encouraging those Christians who honor and love their traditions. And yet heavy shadows cloud their paths.

¹ The frame used by the Coreans when carrying burdens on their backs.

Like a leaden cloud concealing the sun, one such shadow darkens the brow of the missionary, and troubles his heart. He hears so often the cry of the poor and helpless who have been entrusted to his charge; he sees so much misery and has only words to offer as consolation. He himself is so poor. Necessity has compelled him to adopt the mode of life of his poor flock, however contrary this may be to the laws of health, and however destructive of his strength and vigor. He can, however, persevere as long as God wills. The matter which weighs so heavily on his heart, and which he believes he should not endure is his continued inability to help those whom he ought to aid and who ask his assistance. How overjoyed would be his heart if he could contribute to their needs with open hands and thus bring happiness to his entire flock! And how many wealthy people there are who could enable him to do this! Doubly blessed would be these wealthy people—blessed because they have become poor in spirit. What a bright day of glorious sunshine would dawn for the missionary if his fondest hope of helping his flock could be fulfilled!

Another dark shadow which haunts decent poverty is the scorn of the world for the poor,—this scorn being transferred also to Christianity when in heathen climes it declares itself the “religion of the poor.” These scorners must be brought to change their attitude, and, through

the lessons of the Cross, compelled to realize that the true object of their quest should be the imperishable treasures of eternal life. Social conditions, as well as the interest of the Church, imperatively demand that missionaries make the cultural and economic elevation of the people one of their special objects, and labor steadfastly not only to set Christianity on a firm footing (since Christians also have to live in this world), but also to win for it influence and esteem.

The heroism of the Coreans in embracing the thorny path of poverty must awaken our emotion and win lasting honor for these Christians. The missions, however, aim at making more extensive conquests. The Benedictine missionaries from St. Ottilien, true to the traditions of their Order and the training of their motherhouse, have adopted a most successful plan for promoting the missions in Corea. Summoned by the Holy See some years ago to assist in this missionary field, they had scarcely supplied their little house at Seoul with the bare essentials when they founded a trade-school. Their object was to foster the handicrafts in Corea, which were then at a low ebb. This institution secured for the Christians a social ascendancy, and for Christianity itself great honor. How greatly blessed indeed has this undertaking been by God! Hundreds of applicants have to be turned away today because the necessary room, workshops, overseers, and teachers are not available for the instruction of so large a crowd.

In this trade-school, the Christians recognize the solution of the economic problem. The position of the Christians, which was so unsatisfactory since the era of the persecution, must be greatly improved if those who were formerly persecuted and despised, robbed and banished, are to introduce a new social movement and revolutionize economic life. Just as their heroic faith and joyful self-sacrifice evoked the amazement of their heathen fellow-countrymen during the sad years of the persecutions, they ought now to compel all heathen to recognize their religion as a sublime power which is capable of accomplishing such wonderful economic results. These splendid social transformations will teach all Coreans to love and honor the Catholic Church as a truly living mother, who is interested also in providing her children with their daily bread.

Even the pagans come to the trade-school. Perhaps it is their desire to secure an assured livelihood, which gives them the first incentive to compete with the Christian youths in mastering a trade. But very soon everyone of these pagans finds a friend ready to keep him company and explain the truths of the Christian religion. At recreation times they steal away in little groups to some distant part of the extensive, romantic garden. There they sit in pairs under some huge rock, and repeat the Our Father in a whisper until they know it by heart. In another direction several students gather in a

thicket of firs. The Christian students are very clever at meeting the objections quoted from the teachings of Buddha and Confucius, and at setting the Christian truths in a clear light before the truth-seeking souls of their pagan companions. Long before they depart for their homes, the pagan students are received into the Church. Confirmed in their faith and skilled in their trade, they return home filled with zeal to extend the influence of Christianity.

The school enjoys the support of the government, which recognizes openly its great social service. A class of industrious and skilled artisans is being created, who are offering in their work and peaceful activities the best security that they will resist all contamination with the revolutionary ideas which are being introduced ever more openly from the West.

A new life is awakening in these poor Christians. To support all the poverty-stricken ones who come seeking one's help is indeed no little care. Thanks to their awakened intellects and their practical talents, they learn so much in a year that they can afterwards earn their rice and *kimtschi*.² They are, however, immediately succeeded by others, who must again start from the beginning. Such, however, is missionary life, which, as a heavenly work, is naturally attended by care and difficulty. Through the dark clouds,

² *Kimtschi* is the Korean national vegetable.

which cast a heavy shadow over the careworn face of the Abbot of St. Benedict in Seoul, one may see the words in shining character: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." His monks must be consoled, and thankfully raise their eyes to heaven when they have a host of young disciples with whom to share their poverty and distress.

II. Blessed Are the Meek, for They Shall Possess the Land

God suspends His graces from the arms of our crosses. From them stream down salvation and blessings—overflowing blessings not alone for hearts which offer themselves as a willing sacrifice for others, but also for other souls into which these hearts desire to conduct the blessing of God. "In patientia vestra possidebitis animas vestras" (In your patience you shall possess your souls), Our Savior assures us. And not our souls alone, but also those which seek from us consolation and advice, help and sustenance.

Many hearts may storm and rage until finally they recognize the conquering might of patience and the meek power of love which conduct them to the merciful Heart of Our Savior. There at last the fierce throbbing of the pulse and the feverish commotion which expressed itself in quivering lips are subdued and softened by the gentle voice which speaks in broken whispers

from the Cross: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!"

The heart once more becomes calm, and then it learns to interpret the heavy blows of "blind fate,"—to which it was determined to bid defiance, but under which it was being crushed—as the "visitations of God," which confirm the patient of heart, strengthen them, and raise them to a plane above earthly commotions.

Let us endeavor to understand the great mystery which the Heart of Our Savior wishes to reveal to us when He says: "Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of heart." Let us confirm our faith in the beatitude: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land!" And if life's trials sometimes disturb us who stand beneath the Cross, and can contrast our wrongs with Our Savior's, and ask if any grief can equal His; if we still hesitate to forgive and to subdue our rising resentment; if only with great difficulty can our hearts be brought by divine meekness to forget our wrongs and pray with loving submission: "Forgive our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us;" if there are hours of bitterness which are so trying for us as to be almost impossible to bear—how unspeakably hard must be the lot of the pagan world!

From the example of the missionaries, the pagans may perhaps learn the religion of love more quickly, prize it higher and practice it more joyously. Perhaps the forgiveness of the great

wrong which they themselves did to those who came to help them is the golden key which opens their hearts. No human heart is so debased that it cannot appreciate the sublime greatness of forgiveness, since the voice of love awakens a clearer and more lasting echo in the conscience and is a sharper reproach for injustice done than when evil is repaid with evil, and the persecuted one plans revenge.

In the barren clay of hatred, where formerly only thorns and thistles greeted His envoys, Our Savior has planted His Cross as a symbol of peace, and the land now flourishes with His blessings. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will possess the land." Whether the Cross has been planted in the raw climes of the North or in the sun-parched steppes of the Tropics, its compelling moral power has developed around it a wonderful harvest, just as if the living roots of the Cross fostered life and renewed the earth, while choking the weedy outgrowths. In similar fashion the peaceful influence which emanates from the Cross impels men's hearts towards God; a new earth is created, and a new generation walks on it in peace and in love.

With the announcement of the peace of the Cross, the primeval forests of backward Europe were swept away, and the soft green and attractive blossoms of culture appeared. The mild bearing of the messengers of peace, who so often received their death-blow under the Cross and died

asking forgiveness for their murderers, dispelled the vain nonsense which enveloped our ancestors in dismal night and kept them under the sinister influence of the powers of darkness.

As it was then in backward Europe, so it is today in pagan lands. Perhaps we may delude ourselves with the notion that a paradise is to be found where the fiery sun shines on the whispering palm and on the heavily laden banana trees. Under these palms wander the restless inhabitants, who can hardly extract from the stingy soil the wherewithal to clothe themselves; under the stripped banana trees too often moan poor, luckless people, dying of famine. This statement may seem exaggerated, but unfortunately the truth is still more terrible. Year after year famine regularly makes its appearance somewhere in India; sometimes its visitations are more prolonged and terrible, when it carries off the inhabitants by the million and depopulates entire districts. During the great East Indian famine of 1900-1901, no fewer than five million persons fell victims to this scourge, while for years afterwards the regular companions of famine—sickness, want, plague, cholera, and small-pox—took toll of the inhabitants. In Africa also, which our fancy perhaps represents to us in the joyous colors of tropical splendor, this same spectre haunts the land, settling now on one and again on another district.

The curse of sin called famine into existence. With the arrival of sin, the earth's blessing vanished, and the soil was outgrown with thorns and thistles in which men so often vainly vest their hopes. The peace of the Cross first restored to the earth its blessing. After it has once been planted with the tree of the Cross, the most arid soil develops into a fruitful field under this beneficent shade. The fortunate people who witness this change, and are thus brought to the foot of the Cross, will there find salvation and a blessing for their souls. All this is the fruit of peace—the rich harvest of the peacemakers, who labored long and with unspeakable patience in the vineyard of the Lord to produce these fruits.

“On Christmas Day I shall be back again.” These were the last words addressed by Bishop Cassian Spiess, O.S.B., to his missionaries in 1905, when he left the episcopal see of Dar-es-Salaam in East Africa to journey far into the interior.

The native carriers necessary for such a journey were glad to accompany him. He knew the negroes and their customs as very few men did. The negroes listened gladly to his words, for he spoke their language like one of themselves. Besides, there was no need to fear under his command. A determined son of the Tyrolese Mountains, with sharp eye and sturdy hand, he had once through his hunter's skill saved a whole caravan, which was confronted with famine when many days' journey away from all human dwell-

ings. This was common knowledge. The Bishop thought it no trouble after a wearisome day's travel to scour the bush for several hours. All his thoughts were for his dear negroes, and these were sure that no wild bird or beast, which he needed for them, could escape his infallible gun.

Bright and solemn, like every morning in the dry season, dawned the feast-day of the Bishop (August 13). A restful charm and a bewitching peace fill the fragrant air, while the shimmering colors of dawn extend, like a soft silken train, over the purplish bush and the reddish-brown grasses. The silent wilderness seems instinct with a reverential grandeur, as if the day were bringing great and unexpected gifts to the Bishop on his feast-day, and wished to shower them over the caravan, which, impelled by love, was bound for the distant missionary stations in the interior.

Great, un hoped-for gifts of grace are there from which the heart shrinks; and, as the day again hides itself mysteriously in a similar peace and sinks under the softly reddened steppes, our eyes look troubled to the misty distance, as if life must hasten thither into a far distant eternity to meet a new unending day. Meanwhile, our lips breathe softly the anxiety of our hearts: "My God, Thy will be done."

A report reaches the caravan of the near approach of a band of insurrectionary negroes, who, emboldened by the murder of some settlers and the destruction of Livale, are now facing for the

coast to slay the Europeans there. Retreat is impossible for the caravan, since it is many days' journey distant from all human aid. To seek a refuge in the desert, and trust themselves to God, is their only chance.

A long night extends its chilly pall over the wilderness, while the missionaries seek to escape. But the horde of rebels is on their trail. The sun rises, and its blood-red rays tear aside the dark curtains of night. On the preceding days it seemed to transmute everything to gold, and to deck with the brightest and most joyous colors all the silent witnesses of God's splendor—the trees and bushes, the walls of rock and clay—extending a morning greeting to the kind Creator. Today all is clad in fiery purple. The white lilies, growing in mighty luminous tufts, might seem a preparation for the morrow's feast—the feast of the Assumption of our heavenly Queen, who is also the Queen of Martyrs.

Tired from their wanderings during the night, the missionaries and their companions lay down to rest—to their last rest on earth. The Bishop celebrated Mass—the great Sacrifice of peace which is to extend our Savior's peace throughout every clime. Never had the exhortation to prayer been more fervently uttered than now, when the Bishop spoke: "Orate fratres"—"Brethren, pray that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God Almighty." The two Brothers and two Sisters laid their young lives in the chalice with their Bishop. They were prepared.

The moment has in fact arrived. The signs that an attack is imminent increase. The carriers have already fled; the coffers and chests peep out of the withered sedge where they are waiting for the expected plunder. A flood of deep emotions overwhelm the missionaries—a mixture of sorrow and resolution, anxiety and self-sacrifice, fear and hope. What is about to happen to them?

A wild clash of weapons resounds from a neighboring bush. The Bishop rises and advances to meet the hordes who issue from the woods. For a moment they pause, as if surprised to find that they had so quickly found their quarry. The Bishop takes advantage of their momentary irresolution to try to divert them from their murderous purpose. He approaches the leader of the band, and says: "I know you desire to murder or banish the whites. We have come hither only to do you good. We have confined ourselves to healing your sick and teaching your children. We wish only to make you and your people happy. We are missionaries, who aim only at propagating peace. Consequently, I have come to you without weapons in my hand. Return with your people, and leave us in peace."

The warlike, savage body of the leader gives a quick reply. His right arm is raised on high, poising a javelin. The javelin whirrs through the air, and the Bishop sinks to the ground, pierced through the breast. The hiss of a few poisoned arrows is heard, followed by a few out-

cries of pain. A savage howl from the natives rises above the moans of the dying, and the sacrifice of peace is staining the hot sands.

But what of the promise that they shall possess the land? Their blood pours down on the fruitless soil. Will this soil be won by this sacrifice? Tertullian said: "From the blood of the martyrs Christians will blossom." When will his word be fulfilled?

Christmas must first come for this land.

The bells of the cathedral in Dar-es-Salaam are sending the joyous Christmas message out over the blue waves of the harbor and thence into the far distance, as if they wish to greet the returning Bishop, who has promised to be back for the feast.

A boat glides quietly through the water, the waves dancing behind its keel. Again the bells ring out, but have their voice forgotten the joyous Christmas strain? Solemn and sad is their tolling, as a long procession descends to the landing bridge to receive the Bishop and his companions. A small chest holds his few remains—the skull and a few bones which the wild beasts have left behind. Chanting a mournful dirge, the procession bears the remains to the church, where they are to rest in dearly purchased soil.

But when will the promise that they shall possess the land be fulfilled?

The successor of the martyred Bishop was destined to fulfil the latter's peaceful mission. His

first work was to open a mission among the very tribe which began the uprising, in order that their crime might be the occasion of their salvation.

Meanwhile five flourishing mission stations had been destroyed in different parts of the vicariate. Some of the missionaries and the mission Sisters had been murdered, but the majority succeeded in escaping. The flock was entirely scattered; the tree of peace seemed to have been completely uprooted and consumed in the smouldering pyres to which churches and schools had been reduced. Instead of the breath of peace, an atmosphere of murder and arson hovered over the deserted stations from which all blessings had flown.

Such was the condition six years ago, but how are things today?

Like a tree which has been pruned, the Cross has pushed out fresh shoots. The "beati mites" have resurrected the old stations from the ashes and erected new ones. The number of Christians has doubled. Whereas forty schools in the neighborhood of the stations formerly taught earthly knowledge and heavenly truths, there are over three hundred schools today, and the number of children who swarm to these schools and promise all to be Christians, has increased more than ten-fold. From fourteen hundred the number has grown to fifteen thousand.

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land"—a land which, watered with the sweat of honest labor, the tears of patience, and the blood of martyrs, will blossom forth with Christians.

III. Blessed Are They That Mourn, for They Shall be Comforted

During our long journeys over the steppes, through the deserts and marshes, or over the high mountain peaks of Africa, the path was often so rough that we felt the sharp-cornered stones through the soles of our shoes. The sand was often so soft and deep that one could only wade slowly through it. Sometimes our path lay through thorny thickets which tore our foreheads and cheeks. Sometimes cold and stormy days were encountered which made us shiver under our mantles. Finally, there was the rainy season during which we had to wade constantly through broad marshes and ford swollen rivers. Day after day a number of our bearers were sick or injured, owing to their bare feet or scanty clothing. Every evening they assembled faithfully to have their wounds dressed and to ask medicines for all imaginable ailments that can be contracted on such journeys. The tent was scarcely erected, when they squatted around my "magic chest"—a large tin trunk full of medicines, bandage material, and salves. This dispensary work lasted daily for at least an hour.

We traveled thus for two or three weeks, when our journey was broken for a more or less extended stay at some mission station. As may be imagined, our eyes became accustomed to the sight of wounds. In the presence of a racking pain, which distorted the features of the sufferer, we would preserve our composure and offer some words of friendly consolation; but when someone with a large gaping wound or a child covered with sores was brought to us from a village adjacent to the spot where we had pitched our tent, a feeling of grief, to which we believed we had almost grown insensible, pierced our hearts. A sympathetic spirit and a soft heart feels a good deal of the pain which it is forced to witness in another. One feels as if a heart-string was broken, so strangely is one affected by the sight of another's grievous pain. Our own wound heals very slowly until it is finally closed by oblivion.

Such is our attitude towards corporal wounds which we cannot see without feeling profound compassion. If we had transparent souls, into which the light of faith might pass like the spring sun shines into the open perianths of flowers, painting them with their bright colors; if we had truly sympathetic souls, which could be affected by the pangs of spiritual distress, the moral woes of the pagan world would oppress our souls like a mournful tragedy until they had wrung from us gracious tears of sympathetic pity.

J We all have experienced the grief of sin and spiritual distress. The poisoned draft of sin seems sweet at first to our taste, but scarcely have our lips touched the forbidden cup, when heavy grief oppresses our souls. How is it we found it so difficult to confess contritely what we had done in wantonness? It seemed as impossible as it is for a man to withdraw a poisoned dart from his burning wound and thereby allow the blood to flow freely. The poisoned blood, however, must be drawn out, for there is no other way to help him; and scarcely has his heart expelled the tainted blood than it begins to beat easily again and to recall his waning life.

Why do we find it oftentimes so irksome, and why do we hesitate so long, to approach the confessional? There will the hidden wounds of our souls be healed, no matter how deep or long-standing. A loving hand will uncover them and pour in wine and oil so that the throbbing pain will cease and the wounds close again.

But what consolation have the pagan souls? Will they fall less easily into error because the right path is less clear to them, or because they have entirely lost their way in the black night of spiritual darkness? The voice of conscience indeed calls out its warnings even amid the allurements of sin, refusing to be silenced, until, finally stifled, it sinks into a sleep from which it will awaken only at the summons of the Eternal Judge to bear testimony against the soul which

was willing to slay its own conscience. Can this voice of conscience restore peace to the pagan? Can it evoke that heart-consuming grief for sin, and then breathe the consolation of forgiveness and oblivion into the pagan soul? Unblessed indeed is the grief which is the fruit of sin, and not grief for its commission. "Blessed are they that mourn," holds out no consolation to such mourners. It is, however, within our power to bring this consolation to pagan souls.

* * *

The large school-yard of the mission at Kwire offers an interesting picture of native life. Here, before school opens, the nimble negro lads and the light-hearted maidens enjoy the most pleasant moments of their lives. How the tops hum, and the balls fly! With what eagerness shining eyes follow the players who are casting small stones into chuck-holes in the ground! As much eagerness is displayed as if a fortune were at stake. And now hands are clapped and merry songs sung as they join in the dance.

On Saturday, however, the place is as silent as the grave. On other days the children draw near joking and singing. If a shower of rain threatens to spoil the single garment which serves as their entire clothing, they come merrily chatting under the original umbrellas—flapping banana leaves which they hold over their curly heads.

But today quiet rules everywhere. The nearer the children come to the station, the more subdued is their conversation. While they were still at a distance, an occasional clear shout was heard, but the little groups now steal quietly in solemn procession up to the church. There they are joined by new arrivals, all equally earnest and still. It is a day of mourning, a penitential procession. They are preparing for the Sacrament of Penance.

This is the mourning which Christ called blessed. They will find the consolation which comes from a pure conscience, and can greet Sunday with laughter, and exult in the new week. The more earnest their little black faces are to-day as they gaze upon the sun-lit scenes around them, the fresher and brighter will their Sunday hymns ring tomorrow, the more joyous will be the holy peace that their hearts will send out to the world, now enveloped in heavenly majesty. The brightness and loveliness of their pure and guiltless hearts, in which the sun sees no speck of dust, seems reflected as from a clear mirror on the tropical splendor of the landscape, which sings around them in pure rapture and dances in a blaze of color.

Many of their pagan playmates may laugh and joke with them. But their youthful joy does not come from their hearts; it is purely superficial and tends to extravagance; it has not been transfigured in the holy mourning which subdues the

savage and ennobles the natural elements in man. Although usually unnoticed, it is the grief of sin which introduces harsh discord into children's lives. Thereafter, their hearts cannot rid themselves of this sorrow, and can never enjoy the same interior joy as before.

When will the day of true joy come also for those little ones who know nothing of the mourning in which consolation and peace are to be found? When will the peoples, now enslaved by sin, rejoice in the saving blessing of the Cross: "Our chains are broken, and we also are free"?

A sympathetic heart may rejoice in the knowledge that it has brought tender and loving consolation to troubled souls. Before one seed falls on favorable soil, patience must labor long, and often apparently in vain. Indifference and sensuality choke most of the seeds. "Weeping they went forth and scattered their seeds." But while the farmer sows his seeds only in the spring, the laborer in the Lord's vineyard must sow them anew every day. But the time of the harvest will arrive, and the cool evening after the heat of the day will come, when they can quietly look on the fruits of their work: "They return and bring each day in great jubilation their sheaves." How brightly these golden sheaves will shine before the bright throne of God, reflecting the splendor of heaven on the faithful laborers who have carefully planted and tended them, sowing in tears and reaping in joy!

But what was it that finally removed the coating with which the seed of the consoling truth of salvation is so often enveloped? What was it that drew down the dew of heaven on the hidden seed and the tender shoot? What was it that gave the weary laborer the strength to remove the choking weeds with careful hand and thereby ensure the rich harvest? Undoubtedly it was God's grace. It is His task to save, to heal, and to endow with grace—to endow with life, earthly and eternal. And yet it was perhaps also the compassionate tears of a child, who read of the unhappiness of pagan children in the Annals of the Association of the Holy Childhood, and, grieving for his little black and red and yellow brothers far away, knelt down in the church and wept silent, unseen tears into his little hands. These warm, loving tears were transformed into the dew of grace, which God's mercy willed should fall on certain comfortless, hardened souls. Perhaps it is the Hail Mary which some widow added to her mite. And, while the gift allowed some missionary to overcome the opposition of a heart which, while driven to him by hunger, was still angry at the stranger, the prayer mounted up to the Comforter of the Afflicted, and Mary answered the petition for help.

Many are the prayers which have been said, many the offerings made, that the dark mourning of pagandom might be enlightened by the bright consolation of truth. All who have thus prayed

and contributed their offerings will one day rejoice in company with those whom they happily saved. If, however, the two hundred and ninety millions of Catholics were seized with holy compassion and united in their prayers, their mighty appeal for help would burst open the veil of heaven. A flood of joy would then stream down on the earth, a fruitful rain would pour down with God's blessings, and the whole world would be renewed. If only all Catholics shared the loving mercy of the Sacred Heart, which grieves for every erring pagan soul, they would lay their offerings before the Divine Savior, and these evidences of their sympathy would bring consolation to the farthest climes and joy to heaven. "The beneficence of a noble love bridges the chasm" (Dr. Danders) which extends between us, who live in the consoling kingdom of truth, and those unfortunates who wander in the dreadful desert of wretchedness. It bridges the chasm which confronts the pagan, who now vainly wrings his hands because he cannot cross this chasm to his heavenly home. Shall they find this chasm impassable for all eternity?

Our Savior's Heart longs for all human souls. We can, and must, bring consolation to all men's hearts that have not yet learned to sigh for heaven and union with their God. In return for our compassion, God has promised us everlasting peace and consolation.

*IV. Blessed Are They That Hunger and Thirst
after Justice, for They Shall Have Their Fill*

As the Divine Master speaks of thirst and hunger, a strange mixture of emotions fills the hearts of His hearers. How they have hungered when the morning rain delayed, and it seemed as if the seed entrusted to earth must surely wither as soon as the shoots appeared! How often had the evening rain beguiled and finally blasted their hopes when it came only after the burning rays of the sun had consumed the budding blades! Yet "they shall have their fill." The phrase recalls memories of the joyful harvest feasts, when they could celebrate their gratitude for their full barns. If the Speaker would only bring that to pass, it would indeed be a divine work! If only the blessing of God would flow over the land, and banish the spectre of famine!

The missionary provokes the same train of thought, when, in preaching the Gospel to poor pagans, he tells them of this beatitude. Their imagination is powerfully affected. They have heard him speak of the kind Savior and of the miraculous multiplication of the loaves and fishes. To more than one of the natives the thought immediately occurs: "Ah! if the Father could only do that, we should have nothing further to fear from famine. And, when the dry season comes with its burning drought, drying up the little fountains and filling the broad river-beds with hot sands, we need no longer walk for hours with our

pots to fetch water to our huts." The story of the Samaritan Woman at Jacob's Well appeals specially to the maidens, who feel the same petition trembling on their lips: "Give me of this water, that I may not thirst."

The negro children are little beggars, and the adult natives great beggars. However, who can reprove them for begging when suffering the pangs of hunger, since their niggardly soil withholds from them their simple necessities? If only, in these times of famine, the missionary had something to give all who besought his aid! For many the handful of rice, which is necessary to sustain the life of their bodies, would become also the bread of life for their souls. When the hunger of the body is stilled, a hunger of the spirit may arise and gnaw the soul. Then the soul, too, needs nourishment, and the missionary knows how often the truth of the old proverb has been proved among the backward races: "The way to the heart is through the stomach."

This is indeed a circuitous way, and very frequently a wrong way, which ends in disappointed hopes or encounters disheartening ingratitude. Ingratitude indeed is the rock on which excessive trust in the fine feelings of the natives most easily founders.

It is strange that failure has a more lasting effect on most than complete success, which only brightens up for a few moments the dark shadows that unsatisfied hope and apparently unre-

warded labor have cast over timid souls. To revive our waning courage and increase our firm trust in God, why do we not rather turn our thoughts to what we have done in the honest discharge of our duty, in the sincere spirit of self-sacrifice and with the noblest intentions? God has granted us success in these cases, just as in others, when our zeal availed for nothing, He appeared slow to grant His helping grace. If our intentions be so pure and clarified that no failure can disturb us or make us weaken in our efforts, the consciousness of what great and noble works God and His grace have accomplished through our instrumentality may transport our hearts to such a state of beatitude that we shall joyfully embrace the yoke of the Lord, even when its sharp edges pierce our flesh. Inasmuch as it will cost us many a struggle before we can attain this lofty conception of duty, it is very wrong to chide the pagan children for clinging so long to the externals of religion.

Repeatedly, during my stay at the mission stations in Africa, I have noticed how carefully the children were questioned before they were given blessed objects, such as beads or medals. Inasmuch as recently I myself had omitted this interrogation, I could not express surprise or disappointment when Stanislas (a little negro lad of about seven years) one fine afternoon brought back the beads which he had begged from me the same morning as a reward for some little service.

Only a few hours before the bright white beads had caught his fancy, and he probably thought that they would look well on his black neck, like a string of pearls. But when he joyfully showed his present to his comrades, these informed him that a rosary is not intended to be merely worn—one must pray with it. His joy in the beads was then at an end, and the rosary, though a costly one, was henceforth valueless in his eyes. As he stood before me, and handed me back the rosary with an indifferent air, I tried to explain to him that he ought to keep it and learn to pray with it. However, he declined to have anything further to do with it, returning one answer to all my exhortations: “Si taki” (I don’t want to). I saw that his answer was entirely sincere, and the incident thus ended. I could appreciate his feelings, as he was so young.

“This incident may be regarded as a typical example which proves that the fundamental principles of Christianity are entirely beyond the understanding of these natives.” Such is the criticism constantly brought forward by those who regard the efforts of the missionaries as a lost cause. “They cannot grasp its hidden meaning; what they grasp is at most something external, something purely mechanical. ‘Hunger and thirst for justice’ have no place in their conception of religion.”

Why do such critics seize upon examples against which a large number of others can be

cited, proving the existence of a spiritual hunger after piety and communion with God. From the number of such instances with which I am personally acquainted, let me relate the following:

A short time after Stanislas's departure, little Anselm came and besieged me with his prayers and supplications: "I want a rosary." This time I was determined to be more careful; he would not wheedle me; I would remain obdurate. It was my turn to answer: "Si taki." My tone was not cross, but decided. However, the little beggar, who was certainly not older than Stanislas, was also determined, and refused to be so summarily dismissed. Finally, I declared my fixed decision: "I cannot give you beads, because you do not know the Rosary." In reply, he made the Sign of the Cross, folded his little hands, and said first the Apostles' Creed and then the Lord's Prayer. I interrupted him there, and questioned him about the mysteries. My objections were overcome, and Anselm received his rosary with the exhortation that he was to make diligent use of it. He hurried away with beaming face.

I had quite forgotten this incident when a quarter of an hour later I went for a walk in the open air. On the open space before the church the children were engaged in a lively game. As I wished to be undisturbed, I made a detour around the other side of the church so that the children might not notice me. Unseen by them I thus approached the high hedge behind which

slept under their little wooden crosses all the faithful laborers who had succumbed to the burden and heat of the day and now rested from their toil while awaiting their eternal reward. Far behind me I could hear the joyous shouts of the children at play. As I stood before the green-bordered cemetery, the low voice of a child reached me through the hedge. I quietly approached the entrance and looked through the latticed gate. There amongst the graves knelt Anselm with folded hands and in his fingers the beads which I had just given him. I withdrew as quietly as I had come, lest I should disturb the little suppliant. He was dwelling in the land of those fortunate ones who hunger and thirst after justice, and was filled with the loving union which he enjoys with his God.

A true hunger after truth, justice, and holiness possessed the Koreans who laid the extraordinary foundations of the Church in their land. A missionary had indeed once set foot in this land, which was for so long shut off from foreign intercourse. No one, however, remembered the brief visit of Father de Cespedes, S.J., in 1592. Two hundred years had elapsed when some Christian books written in the Chinese language fell into the hands of a few Korean scholars. They discussed the writings for a long time among themselves, and found them so beautiful that they resolved to live according to the principles laid down in these books. They assembled for morn-

ing and evening prayer in common, and celebrated the Sabbath with prayer and meditation.

Very soon the little society grew, and also awakened the opposition of the pagans. In 1791 the first martyr was put to death on Corean soil, but the persecution only bound the Christians more closely together in a religious community. They selected from amongst their number a bishop and priests until a more searching study of the religious writings provoked a doubt as to whether the official acts of a priesthood founded by themselves were valid. Immediately all resigned their offices, and one of the Christians was sent on the long journey to Peking to obtain the decision of the missionary bishop there. The messenger was also to ask for a priest so that they might be guided by him along the path of salvation. In 1794 their wish was fulfilled. Father Tsin joined them, and prepared them for the bloody persecution which, in 1801 and 1802, was to bring the martyr's crown to the pastor and most of his flock.

For thirty years thereafter the Church in Corea suffered a spiritual hunger without priests or sacraments, but its strong love was intensified by two further persecutions, which had only the effect of increasing the number of Christians. Their hunger and thirst after the consolations of holy religion and after the Bread of the strong found expression in urgent petitions to the Holy Father in Rome. "In our religious books," they

wrote, "we read that the Gospel has been carried overseas to the remotest lands, even to the confines of the earth. But our kingdom in this distant corner is forgotten; our land alone remains in darkness. We are only children and uneducated men, but from the depth of our misery we direct our looks towards the blood and the crumbs which fall from the Lord's table."

Their hunger was finally to be satisfied. In 1836 the first European succeeded in penetrating into the closed land. Other missionaries followed, and a zealous flock assembled about them. Their fidelity was indeed to be tested by two more bloody persecutions. The last of these persecutions in 1866 robbed them of two bishops and all their missionaries, and thousands of Christians were, like their pastors, subjected to the most refined tortures before being beheaded. They thus furnished the strongest proof of their hunger for justice and for the possession of the all-just and eternal God, who had promised to satisfy them with everlasting, imperishable joy.

Can Islam in Africa, or Buddhism in Eastern Asia, awaken this hunger and thirst after justice? One would think so, if one heeded the admirers of Buddha and the Islam fanatics amongst us, who think very little of the Christian conception of life. Buddha provokes an unfulfilled longing for rest; the teaching of the Prophet incites an unquenched thirst for earthly pleasures and sensual satisfaction.

“That the negroes would accept Mohammedanism more easily than Christianity, especially because the former allows polygamy and otherwise corresponds better with their passive temperament, I do not doubt . . . ; but that Mohammedanism could raise the negro to a higher level than Christianity, none will venture seriously to assert. If such were the case, it would be the first instance in the history of religions where Mohammedanism exerted a more enduring effect on a people than Christianity.”

Such is the report of Dr. Kulz to those who regard Islam as “more suitable for the negro.”

How could Islam, which has drunk insatiably of the blood of millions of mortals slaughtered in the slave-hunts, and whose wild greediness no amount of shining gold could satisfy—how could it offer a blessing and blessedness to the human heart? Its effect and its hunger leave behind no feeling of beatitude: a curse follows always in its footsteps.

“Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice”—not after earthly pleasures—“for they shall have their fill.”

Why does Our Savior teach us to pray: “Give us this day our daily bread”? He desires to remind us, who possess more than we need, of the hungry, who may be lost forever if our compassion fails them.

V. Blessed Are the Merciful, for They Shall Obtain Mercy

As soon as the wild passions, such as avarice or unbridled ambition or sensuality, harden man's heart and make it impervious to the promptings of humanity, such a stony heart can as little be moved by compassion as a frozen pond can be moved by a thrown pebble, which slides along its hardened surface to the bank on the other side. But when a placid brook receives the blow, it distributes it in widening circles to its entire surface. Many tribes are sunk so low that their spiritual nature seems to be thus frozen. With the blood-thirstiness of a beast of prey, they rend and devour their victims, and under the appalling pressure of this inhumanity the natural laws themselves seem to have been destroyed. But even where the idea of the solidarity of the family and race is most pronounced, the pagans display towards strangers an unmerciful disposition which often develops into a distinctive racial peculiarity.

The Chinese can sail by a sinking ship unmoved, although they could easily perhaps save all the despairing crew. The hopeless struggle with death continues, and only their countrymen can succor them. These, however, vouchsafe them only a glance, while asking themselves: "What have we to gain from it?" As they have nothing to gain, they leave the doomed ship to the mercy of the wind and the helpless sailors to the mounting waves, which will soon suck down bark and

crew to a watery grave. Unmoved as if nothing unusual had happened, the others continue in their sloop with extended sails to the destination which promises them gold.

The Arabs are famed for their hospitality. I fancy, however, the tea with which my kind host entertained me after a long and sultry journey must have tasted like blood. His father had been a slave-hunter. How many thousand poor negro women and innocent children, how many courageous men who came to their defence, must have been slain by the murderous weapons of his dissolute band! Their piteous whimperings, their heart-rending cries of grief, must have begged for mercy. But mercy was unknown in the deserted woods of the wilderness, or had been stifled in the crackling flames which consumed their huts. In the hearts of this profligate band a cry for mercy found no echo, for all human sentiments had there been drowned in blood.

The son had espoused a milder occupation. He sent out a well-armed band of elephant hunters. Instead of the black ivory which had brought his father wealth, the white tusks of the elephant maintained for the son his inherited position and esteem.

These shining tusks, however, must have seemed red when one thinks of the blood that purchased them—the blood of the black hunters trampled on by the infuriated beasts or transfixed by these very tusks.

The most precious amulet which these hunters prepare to obtain luck in the chase, is the heart of their nearest of kin. To obtain possession of this infallible charm, they must first poison their wife, mother, or a favorite child. In the first days of his apprenticeship, when he is learning the secrets of hunting, the hunter probably repels the horrible suggestion. Later, however, he feels he must be a master in his work, and he has only this means of attaining success.

Corean hospitality is also famous, but it lacks the control of reason which would prevent their natural pity for strangers from developing into indiscriminate liberality for all vagabonds. It is a beautiful custom when a stranger can obtain everywhere a drink of water and a pipe of tobacco, and at night-time a guide with a lighted torch to conduct him to the nearest inn. Such courtesy is demanded by the customs of the land. But how many there are who abuse this custom and live on the kindness of the people! From one end of the year to the other, they wander from house to house and from town to town, and exact everywhere their toll, because no one dares to show them the door. One of the most beautiful characteristics of the negro is his unselfishness. It is a very pleasing sight to see the negroes around the camp-fire passing the smoking pipe from hand to hand and from mouth to mouth. Still more encouraging is it to see how even the children practice this racial virtue. If you give

one of them a little salt, he divides the grains amongst his companions, although in his estimation there is nothing in the world which can compare with the preciousness of salt.

But even those attractive characteristics of pagandom betray the lack of those clear colors and distinctive touches which moved Our Savior to declare: "Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy." In order that His disciples might better understand this command, He elucidated it as follows: "If you love those who love you, what reward will you have, do not this also the publicans? And if you greet only your brethren, is it much that you do? Do not this also pagans?" He demands more; He must demand more. Natural humanity must take on a supernatural value and be based on higher ideals if it is to merit beatitude and God's mercy.

The heart must expand and must find a place for all men, showing towards all without exception a merciful love. The meaning of this Beatitude must be veiled when the missionary repeats it on his first appearance in a pagan village. The natives otherwise would shake their heads and declare: "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. That is the tradition of our fathers. Bloody wars of revenge are our duty. We have lived by robbery and theft till now. The weaker yields to me today and I shall enslave him; tomorrow I shall become the slave of a stronger man. Why should I not use my power as long as I can?

Compassion is weakness; mercy is folly. He renders a poor service to a beggar who gives him to eat and to drink since what he gives he himself loses, and he prolongs the wretched life of the beggar" (Plautus). Such are the sentiments of paganism.

Our compassion, however, must open a path to pagan hearts which Our Savior's mercy can follow. The missionary knows the only path that is passable: "*Imitatores mei estote sicut et ego Christi*" (Be imitators of me as I also of Christ). In these words the Apostle of the Gentiles has written the sign-post, indicating the way we must follow after him. With the living example of Christ's gracious mercy, he brings the influence of Our Savior's conquering love to bear on the hardened hearts of those to whom the conduct of the missionaries is an insoluble riddle. However, the mystery which at first envelops the white men and women in the habits of their Orders gradually disappears. It becomes clearer day by day that it is the task of the missionaries to do good. The numerous sick, who have been nursed back to health under the attentive care of the Sisters, speak of their affectionate charity. The gifts which merciful hands distribute amongst the hungry soften the hard-hearted. In the schools the little children are influenced by the loving solicitude shown towards them. Even the dead are not forgotten by the Fathers, who show more interest in the deceased relatives of mem-

bers of their congregations than the natives themselves. They never fail to be present at the burial of one of their flock. These foreign men and women declare all this to be their duty. They shrink from neither sickness nor persecution; they brave the rigors of a strange climate and do not fear even death itself. These considerations have commanded the recognition and respect of even the most cruel judges during the persecution, even when they could not overcome their unconquerable hate. How encouraging it must have been to the young Christians to see the missionaries, after all their labors and sacrifices for the salvation of souls, lay down their life and blood for the same holy cause! From a far-off country they had come, impelled by merciful compassion for the natives, and now their love for these same natives is conducting them to their death. They are dying for their faith and for the souls whose salvation has made them the prey of ravenous wolves.

“I came to Corea to save their souls,” answered Bishop Berneux to the judges who asked why he had come into their land. “I have been here ten years, and during that time have received nothing gratis, not even wood and water.” The bishop wished thus to contradict the calumny of the pagans who were always insinuating that the missionaries had no means of livelihood at home and had therefore come to Corea to enrich themselves. When the pagans were mocking the pro-

cession of the martyrs (the bishop and three of his companions), on the way to the place of execution outside the capital, the Bishop admonished the crowd: "Do not laugh, when you should rather lament. We came to bring you everlasting happiness. Who will now show you the way to heaven? Ah! how I pity you!" Such was the expression of his merciful love, although his words were drowned by the roars of the infuriated mob. The sobbing Christians, who had mingled with the crowd to see the end of their greatest benefactors, did not even dare to express their gratitude for the kindness and love they had experienced at the hands of the missionaries. They were lost in the pagan mob, and, after the sandy banks of the Hangkang had drunk up the blood of the martyrs, the corpses were buried in the spot where they had fallen. This was on March 8, 1866.

Half a year later, when the fury of the persecution had somewhat subsided, the Christians ventured to approach the sorrowful spot. With difficulty they had collected enough money to have coffins made for the remains of their beloved pastors. The Christians had lost everything during the persecution. Many women sold their rings—the only one of their possessions they had succeeded in saving—but they were determined to perform for their Bishop and missionaries this last service of love. Under cover of the night, they sadly disinterred the remains of their fathers

and teachers, and, when morning broke on their work, concealed the bodies and set a watch over them to ward off the wild beasts. During the following night, they carried the remains to an adjacent hill. Here they dug graves, sprinkled them with holy water, recited the Office of the Dead, and pledged fidelity to the Faith. They had now contributed all that they had—their few trinkets and their labor. They had endangered their lives, and offered up their prayers and their love as a last return for the loving compassion which had conducted the good shepherds to death for their flock.

An unspoiled soul—a soul naturally Christian (*naturaliter christiana*)—readily understands the language of love, and soon learns to converse in it. I was moved to tears when the little girls at Dar-es-Salaam brought me a handful of pennies, and asked me to say Mass for one of their companions who had died a little while before. They had collected their scarce pennies, which were not easy to acquire. Ripe fruits and strings of pearls tempted them in the shops. Their little sister, however, had died so suddenly, and they were determined to help her through the sacred efficacy of the Mass. How their black eyes shone, as if they wished to shout aloud: “To give is more blessed than to receive.”

This sweet consciousness of well-doing—the interior peace which we derive from helping others in their time of necessity and consoling

those in distress—is a foretaste of the beatitude of heaven.

What would we have been but for the compassion of true leaders of souls, pious teachers and zealous pastors? How would we have fared but for the loving solicitude of our holy Mother the Church, and but for the mercy of Our Divine Redeemer? We should help in extending Christ's mercy and the care of the Church to the pagan world so that even the poorest of mortals may enjoy them, and attain salvation.

To co-operate in this work of the missions is a glorious work of the purest charity—to be and to make others merciful; to ensure our salvation and to enable others to attain theirs; to establish our claim for mercy from Him who regards all the good done for His sake as done to Himself; to conduct souls to their all-merciful God so that they may ask His mercy and gain everlasting happiness.

VI. Blessed Are the Pure of Heart, for They Shall See God

Nothing appears to be more sharply impressed on paganism than sensuality; nothing seems to find less soil among pagans wherein to take root than this beatitude of Our Savior, which He Himself confesses not all can embrace—the lovely sacrifice of virginal chastity. Those who embrace it, should cling to it as their most precious treasure—a possession which lends to their soul a dis-

tinctive beauty and a wondrous brightness. They should cling to this beatitude and ponder over it; it will raise their souls above the earth and conduct them through the bright angelic choirs (*sunt sicut angeli*) to the all-pure and all-holy God, whose countenance is the joy of heaven.

Blessed are the pure of heart.

Will pagan souls when they learn of this beatitude be attracted by the beauty and the glorious sublimity of virginal chastity, will they understand when the missionary tries to describe this virtue in the inspired words of God: "Oh, how beautiful is a chaste race in the splendor of its virtue! Immortal is its remembrance, for it is recognized by God and by man." Will they appreciate this virtue, and will they have the courage to strive to attain it and to foster it in their hearts? Perhaps amongst no people had vice so poisoned the moral atmosphere as amongst the pagan Romans. Yet, perhaps at no time did so many virgins gladly proceed to the place of execution to give testimony there of their pure, undivided love and fidelity for their Divine Spouse. We must conclude that, in their longing for union with Him, they joyfully embraced death so that they might the sooner see Him who gathers pure souls together in a privileged choir. They wished to follow the Lamb and to sing the hymn which only the choir of virgins may sing to the spotless Lamb of God.

Moral conditions in pagan lands, whether amongst the lowest tribes or the more civilized peoples, are certainly no worse than those of ancient Rome. Many of the lower tribes do indeed reject at first the idea of unmarried chastity. Their thoughts and feelings have been too much confined to sense impressions for their hearts to appreciate the tender influence of a pure love. In the case of such peoples the soil must be prepared beforehand, and this preparation consists in the reformation of the conditions of family life. Family life, the ties of which have been weakened among these peoples, must be renewed and strengthened with the Christian spirit, and in the Christianized family the lily of virginity will then blossom.

To realize this ideal will demand great labor from the missionary. Polygamy not alone tears asunder the family bond, but opens the door to unbridled sensuality. Unfortunately, polygamy is so closely bound up with the mental outlook and the economic life of many tribes that it is exceedingly difficult at first to preserve the recently converted families from the destructive influence of the surrounding pagans. Only with the greatest difficulty can the Christian children be saved from the elders of the villages, who exercise a sinister power and whose influence stands or falls with the ancient customs. The missionary must display the greatest vigilance if he wishes to prevent his charges from being

spirited away, hurried to the wilderness with the pagan children, and forced to participate in the rites held to celebrate their attainment of puberty. These cruel celebrations act on their innocent souls like night-frost on a tender blossom in springtime, and kill all childhood in their hearts.

No anxious mother's eye watches over the black pagan children to guard their innocence. Among many tribes the children may absent themselves two weeks or longer from their parents' hut without a word of complaint from father or mother. They seek shelter now with acquaintances and again with relatives, sitting down to eat wherever they will, for no one drives them away. The tender innocence of childhood accompanies them until they, only too early, lose it in guilt.

The angels must search in vain for these courageous spirits who wander over the earth like unto them—angels in the flesh. Everywhere they meet weeping Guardian Angels who mourn over a destroyed treasure—a soul whose purity had been entrusted to them. They found it impossible to protect it.

Grief also seizes our hearts when we see the first wild storms of life burst over a childlike soul, shaking its blossoms of innocence into the dirt of earth. We can help in creating safe abodes in which these innocent souls may be sheltered—Christian families where a mother's love watches and prays. There the lily of virginity will

flourish. Even among these negro tribes Christianity has already brought forth such fruits: native priests and cloistered nuns who dedicate all the burning love of their hearts to Our Savior and the welfare of their tribes-people.

The praise of virginity is more readily understood in those lands where a well-ordered family life encloses the youthful years of the children as in a holy shrine. Although celibacy is even here something strange, the lauding of virginity awakens a joyous echo in loving hearts, and inspires them to holy self-denial and an ardent love for God. In the case of the sorely tried Corean Church, for example, virginity blossomed in its most enrapturing forms during the persecutions, like lilies among thorns, and not infrequently attained its highest eminence in martyrdom.

During the first Corean persecution (1801-02) we meet one most attractive personage, filled with childlike candor and heroic courage of soul, Luitgard Ni. Father Tsin, the first and only Chinese priest in the country, had been laboring in Corea since 1794. The noble priest, who was later to die a martyr's death, had advised the noble maiden to wed a young nobleman in accordance with the customs of the land. He also proposed to the young couple the plan of preserving perpetual virginity. Some years later they were separated from each other in prison. Luitgard, whom Father Tsin had commanded to write her whole life,

tells with touching candor of her sufferings, sorrows, and joys, of her hopes and longings—a narrative that reminds one of the Acts of the Martyrs of the Catacombs. From her prison she wrote to her mother as follows: “When I came for the first time to my husband’s house, what had been greatly troubling me before seemed easy to me. I came at the ninth hour, and at the tenth we both took the vow of perpetual virginity, and for four years have lived as brother and sister. Through the merits of the Precious Blood, which we invoked together, we have overcome the temptations of the devil. I am telling you this that you may not grieve for me. When you receive this page, rejoice as if I myself came to you. But is it not frivolous of me to be transmitting my thoughts and writings to you before I have done or suffered anything? However, I am doing it, Mother, to calm and console you.”

The opportunity for suffering was soon to appear. Her virginal spouse was tried and tortured. The true “sister” heart of Luitgard anxiously asked: “Did he remain steadfast? Did he die a blessed martyr’s death? The thought of him grieves my heart. Did he sign his own judgment, and is all now over? For he must first die before he can be happy.” That was the consolation for which she longed. A note from her faithful spouse said to her: “Console yourself and be of good courage; in heaven we shall see each other again.” Thus he had gone to his

death, and Luitgard expresses her joy in a letter: "The happiness of my spouse fills me with delight."

And now she in turn must appear before the judge. Simply and plainly she tells the story: "I received a sound cudgeling on the legs. They replaced the block about my neck, and conducted me back to the prison, for the sentence of death was already passed. I was full of wounds, and the blood ran on the floor . . . If I should die well and be a martyr, my sins will be washed away in a moment, and I shall enter into ten thousand joys. Regard my death as true life and my life as a true death, and do not grieve for me if you lose me."

Such was the language of a pure, holy love, and with a peaceful smile on her lips she hurried to the death which brought her to the Divine Spouse, whom she so ardently desired. Luitgard was only twenty years old when, on January 31, 1802, the executioner's sword completed her sacrifice. While her innocent blood still flowed over the ground, her pure soul winged its flight upwards to enjoy the blessed vision of God.

Other heroic figures, glowing with love and fidelity, played their rôles in the great drama of the Christian persecutions in Corea. During the second persecution of 1839, Anthony Kim and his two sisters were thrown into prison. Enraged and amazed, the judge asked the sisters: "Why are you not yet married?" The elder replied:

"Because among Christians virginity is placed higher than marriage." The meek courage of the two virgins, however, did not temper the cruelty of the mandarins or the executioners. Their shoulders, elbows, and knees were lacerated by inhuman blows, and their bones were broken, causing them unspeakable agony. By order of the judge, each was then stabbed thirteen times with red-hot bodkins, but the greater their sufferings, the higher the joy of the two martyrs soared. Love for their Savior gave them the strength to win the double crown of virginity and martyrdom amid the most frightful torments and under the most scandalous cruelties of the executioners. A host of other virgins suffered at the same time, and joined the victorious procession of heroic women martyrs. A noble maiden, Magdalen He, had her clothes stained with blood and cast into a field to give her relatives the impression that she had been devoured by a tiger. She hoped thus to escape marriage, which, according to the Corean custom, the daughter must accept without question at the dictate of her father. But she was soon to dye her garments with her own blood and to betake herself gladly to the heavenly marriage-feast prepared by Our Savior in heaven.

Virginal love is both great and ingenious. This ingenious love converted young Andrew Kim, the first native priest, into a martyr hero. In the service of the Church he suffered a long and constant martyrdom, so that even the judges

were amazed at his sufferings and mortifications, and would gladly have spared his life. One single word, one equivocal expression which could be interpreted as a denial of his Faith, would have set him free. But he could not betray the Faith for which he had been dying daily. He was finally executed in 1846, a shining example for the grateful, modest, exemplary, zealous native clergy who were to continue courageously his work among their fellow-countrymen.

Like bright, angelic apparitions, innocent children also joined in this great triumphal procession of chaste love—Peter Niu, little Anastasia Ni, and the countless others who fled with their parents over the ice and snow, and perished in hundreds of hunger. A few incidents from the lives of the two children just mentioned will show how clearly the eye of innocence can see into heaven, consumed with the desire to be admitted to the everlasting vision of their Savior.

Long before the outbreak of the persecution of 1839, little Peter had undergone private persecution at the hands of his mother and brothers and sisters. These tormented him unceasingly and in most unbearable fashion, because they could not tolerate his remaining a Christian. He thus developed sufficient strength at the age of thirteen to undergo all the tortures of the executioner. Everything was employed to make him apostatize—flattery, threats, and the most dreadful tortures—but all in vain. The cruel bailiffs

vainly devised cruelty after cruelty. One of these inhuman monsters used his pipe³ as an implement of torture, inflicting with it all the varied series of official tortures. In a wild rage he pressed the blunt edge of the pipe deep into the boy's thigh, and tore out a piece of flesh, saying to the little fellow: "Do you want to remain a Christian?" "Certainly," answered Peter, "and this pain will not prevent me from remaining one." Peter was interrogated fourteen times and tortured as often. Meanwhile he had received more than six hundred lashes and forty blows with a plank, the first blow of which tears away pieces of flesh. His whole body was lacerated and now consisted of only one single wound. His bones were broken, and yet over the boy's features spread a mysterious radiance, his lips gently whispered a prayer, and his open eyes were directed towards heaven. Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God!

What rapture must have awaited the little saint when death at the hands of the executioner in prison finally brought relief to his martyred body! No longer had his eyes to seek longingly for Him whom he had now found, and for whom his childish soul had so patiently persevered and so strongly yearned.

Two months later Anastasia Ni, a maiden of only twelve years, was thrown into the same pris-

³ The head of a Korean pipe is made of metal, and in size and shape resembles a thimble.

on. Her mother had carefully instructed the child, who had thus the happiness of being admitted to Holy Communion two years before. It was fortunate that she had been strengthened by the Bread of the Strong which produces virgins, for as the rage of the haters of Christianity did not subside, but kept striving to extirpate the Christians, Anastasia was sent to join her mother in prison.

"If you deny your God and curse Him, I will save your life," said the mandarin; "if not, I shall have you put to death."

But Anastasia replied: "Since I have reached the age of reason, I have served God. I shall not deny or curse Him today. No, I could not do that, even if I had to die a thousand times."

The judge did not dare to torture the tender child, and sent her back to her mother in prison. By pious artifices the mother spurred her to stand steadfast.

"My child," she said, "I believe you will deny your Faith."

Anastasia dissented strongly.

"But if you are tortured, you will give way. You are not strong enough to persevere."

The little one assured her that she would remain faithful.

"Well," said the mother, "we'll see whether you are able to do so."

Moved at the sight of the innocent child, the bailiffs tried to save her. If they could have in-

duced her to utter a single equivocal word, it would have sufficed to win her liberty, but this word never crossed the lips of this brave innocent. The little childish heart was to preserve its strong love for the Divine Friend of Children. The judge had pointed rods stuck into the body of the little one, which, being so tender, suffered double pain, and indeed seemed too frail for the implements of torture. The bloody boards descended on the quivering little body, which bled from a thousand wounds. The weak frame is broken, but the little heart remains strong. At last sentence of death is passed. Anastasia is brought back to the prison, and thrust into the coarse company of robbers and murderers. Since her mother had meanwhile died from the tortures inflicted on her, the child had no other consolation left in this dissolute company than prayer to Him who loves little ones so dearly because of their innocence. Finally, filled with rage and despair, the executioners extinguished the weak flickering flame of life by strangling the holy child, thereby giving her all that she had for years so ardently desired—the everlasting vision of her Savior and her God.

Such virtue, such heroism, and such magnanimous love will be awakened by the Christian religion wherever men embrace it with their whole souls.

A countless host of little children, in their spotless garb of baptismal innocence, pass un-

sullied through the snares of sin to another and more beautiful world, and add their silvery voices to the hymn of praise which pure and loving souls sing to the Lamb of God. Thousands and thousands of the children who are cast into the Chinese rivers by their heartless mothers fly directly to the paternal arms of God. These little innocents possibly owe their everlasting bliss to the savings of the children of the Association of the Holy Childhood, which carries on a crusade for the rescue and baptism of Chinese babies.

In this work of salvation also love proves itself ingenious. In Taikou, one of the largest cities in Corea, for instance, a score of Christian widows formed a society, and, posing as peddlers, visited the suburbs, baptizing and thus opening the gate of heaven to dying children. The pagan mothers now know these women, and often voluntarily bring them their sick children "in order that they may go to heaven." As a result, these good matrons baptize annually about three hundred children, and add as many saints to heaven.

Shall we allow these Corean women, who have only recently been rescued from their pagan surroundings, to put us to shame? Shall we, who have been born and nurtured in the Christian Faith, relinquish entirely to their deep-seated faith the task of saving these immortal souls for God, while we are quite content if we ourselves do not miss the way to heaven? These magnanimous workers, who labor so diligently in the

service of the Church, will one day have the special joy of hearing the sweet hymns of praise which these little angels sing before the throne of God.

We should send before us to the bright throne of God at least one of these little ones who would otherwise have perished in the night of pagandom. Our little ambassador will sing the praise of God until we also are admitted to the Beatific Vision for all eternity.

*VII. Blessed Are the Peacemakers, for They Shall
Be Called the Children of God*

With the first sin the peace of God disappeared from the world. This peace had been established in Paradise, and thrilled the hearts of our first parents. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."—These words were re-echoed from all the trees of the Garden. Our first parents were children of God, blessed and joyous as only happy children can be; and they were made ten thousand times more blessed and joyous when their Heavenly Father walked in the Garden, for they then knew and felt themselves to be in the very presence of God.

All this blessed existence, however, came to an end. A whisper now comes from the thistles, through which the serpent crawled away, and from the thorns in which sorrow now lurks: "For the godless there is no peace."

Since then man has wandered through the world bereft of peace. Sin with its curse has pursued him, yielding no rest to his grief-torn heart. The further away from God man strays, the greater his anguish grows, until finally his soul becomes too blunted to feel the burning pang of its estrangement from God.

But few of the many millions that trod the thorny path of sin after the days of Adam, even attempted to seek the way back to peace. These few discovered traces of the path which had conducted man away from God. They once more caught a glimpse of God, as if indeed through the dusk and at a remote distance, and this glimpse fostered a hope in their souls that they might regain peace for themselves and others. Night fell again, however, the traces were lost along the well-trodden highway of the world, and the spiritual longing of man remained still unsated. As for the mass of the people, if their oppressed hearts ever cried for peace, they always met the same depressing answer: "There is no peace!"

This condition has remained in pagandom to the present day. The first traitorous breach of peace, when man rebelled against his Lord, was followed by the first murder. Then, wherever the serpent dwelt, hate and wickedness flourished. Soon the blood of slaughtered brethren flowed all over the earth, and mankind even forgot that it was, and should ever remain, one family. Men had in truth ceased to be the children of God.

Murder and war have raged through the world since then, casting firebrands into peaceful homes and offering a cup of poison even to a friend whenever he is an obstacle to selfish advantage. It was so in pagan antiquity; it is so among pagan peoples today; and the curse of sin will seize even the so-called Christian lands as soon as godlessness overthrows the peace of God and treads under foot the symbol of peace—the Cross.

The Cross still stands erect with the promise of peace—peace with God, peace among men, peace of soul. All can find this peace who seek it at the foot of the Cross. Instinct with peace and radiating joyful hope and consolation, the Cross exercises its influence over wider circles than one is at first inclined to believe. One may shake one's head doubtfully, and be inclined to disbelieve this. Visit, however, a cemetery. Many of those interred there knew little of peace during their mortal lives, but they attained it finally in death. Look at the long rows of crosses—some large and some small, some formed of a few wooden laths, while others are gorgeously chiseled in marble or cast in indestructible iron. On practically every cross you can read the letters: R. I. P. (Rest in Peace). From the subterranean passages of the Catacombs where the very atmosphere is redolent with peace, this holy greeting to the departed has been handed down to us. "Vivas in pace" (Live in peace), was the hopeful prayer of the child for the mother, and of the mother for the child.

Let us now examine the funeral mounds erected by pagans: the gigantic pyramids in whose cool vaults the Pharaohs have lain through the centuries; the Celtic graves which received the heroes with their spears and battle-axes; the royal graves of the Corean rulers, surmounted by mighty mounds and guarded by stone lions and huge statues of their ministers; the innumerable humble mounds in China. The promise of a grave in an open field suffices to bring happiness to a dying Chinaman, and, while his body rests in this grave, his soul is supposed to have taken up its residence in a small rectangular tablet of wood (an ancestral tablet).

But let us see whether on these ancestral tablets, over these funeral mounds, on the stone scrolls held by the royal ministers, on the walls of the pyramids, or in the glass ornaments of the Celtic heroes, you can discover the word "peace." And yet this word expresses the idea underlying the vaults, the tablets, and the heroes' tombs, for what are these memorials but an expression of the semi-articulate longing after the everlasting peace which the souls of the deceased have gone forth to seek?

Only under the Cross is this peace to be found; only under the Cross will all mankind be reconciled in worldly peace; only under the Cross can the peace of God be regained. The Cross alone can subdue wild passions; the Cross alone can tame the warring tribes, which now destroy each

other in their lust for robbery and murder; the Cross alone can change the bloodthirstiness of the cannibals, and win them for true civilization.

"Blessed are the peacemakers," is the message of One who has shed His Blood on the Cross for the sake of our peace. "Blessed are the peacemakers," was repeated by His apostles, who, strengthened by the Cross and its blessings, suffered and endured everything to propagate the peace of the Cross. "Blessed are the peacemakers," rejoices every heart that freely accepts the message of the Savior, and strives to understand and practice the peace of the Gospel.

What stories of hideous wrong, wild hate, and cruel inhumanity the waves of the ocean would relate, if they could tell us of all the horrors they have witnessed along the distant shores of lonely isles.

"These Kanaks," writes one missionary of conditions in New Guinea, "live in everlasting feuds with their neighbors. Revenge and a craving for human flesh impel them to horrors of every description. A good number of the twenty-six boys who at present attend our mission school, know the taste of human flesh, and there is not one but could skilfully dissect a human body. In the whole district there is not a woman who has not on her conscience the death of one of her children. Weakly children are slain without compunction, and when twins are born, one of the poor innocents is always sacrificed. Pigs are es-

teemed more highly than children, and the missionaries have more than once heard old women say to young mothers: 'This is no time to bring up children; you must fatten a pig for the next feast.' To acquire the necessities of life by quiet labor seems too difficult a task for these people. They prefer to drink the blood of their brethren, and, like savage hyenas, devour their flesh in abominable feasts."

How strange the missionary must seem to these savages, when he holds up before them his little cross, and admonishes them to cultivate peace! Can he really find words in their language to deliver this message? He can indeed find the words, but he is compelled to combine them in so strange a sense that his language is like that from a distant locality.

"What have the missionaries accomplished in their ten years of difficult labors among these people?" asks the missionary. "Among the adults practically nothing. Even the most elementary requirements of the Christian law are too elevated for these men, who obey only instinct and the desires of their senses. One thing, however, they now hesitate to do—namely, kill their own children, although, whenever they can commit the murder secretly, they cannot withstand the temptation. The only hope of the missionaries rests with the children. To the influence of these must be chiefly attributed the fact that the murder of new-born babies is no longer practiced as openly

as before. Whenever the children scent danger, they hurry to the missionary, and he uses every exertion to save the poor little waifs from their unnatural parents and to bring them to the safe refuge of the mission station.”⁴

Every mission house thus becomes an abode of peace where the angels of God pass to and fro. Doomed children are conducted to this saving ark, in which spiritual life and peace, as well as bodily safety, await them. Hence are dispatched envoys bearing an olive branch to districts through which a deluge of savagery is sweeping, submerging persecutors and persecuted alternately in its bloody flood. Each evening the little bell in the mission tower rings out the Angelus, telling the world of a peace which will still the raging waves.

Every one of these children living in a mission house becomes an apostle of peace to his people. Their faces quickly reflect the blessed gentleness of the kind Friend of Children. After a few years they will return to their mothers with joy and peace written on their faces. May we not hope that their mothers will feel the reflection of happiness and peace, and, if only for a few moments, feel in their hearts the influence of love and goodness?

When will the time come when a peaceful people will drive the plough through the soil which heretofore has been fertilized only with the

⁴ “Catholic Missions.”

blood of the murdered? When will the people kneel under the Cross and pray for themselves and their children: "From anger and hatred and all ill-will, O Lord, deliver us!" Instead of asking when that time will come, we should rather ask ourselves what we can do to hasten its arrival. If we wish to prove ourselves children of God, let us do everything we can to establish peace throughout the world and to make mankind again recognize itself as a single, grand family whose father is God. "That they may all be one!" Alas! the day may never dawn when all will be one. But is it not a blessed work to conduct even one soul back to the Prince of Peace—to assemble the whole population of a village or town in its little church to praise their Father in heaven? But let us not speak of those safe within the Church, but rather of those who, without our help, may be lost forever. Quietly and safely glides the Bark of Peter through the waves of time towards the blessed shores of the home of peace. We are safe in that ship. Wringing their hands, restless millions of people walk along the coasts, disappear, and are succeeded by new crowds. Every individual in these crowds longs for peace. All have the same right as we to sail in Peter's Bark. An unfeeling heart may remain indifferent as to whether they shall finally reach their goal at the end of their wanderings, or whether they shall perish piteously. A child of God who hopes to attain peace will never shut his

ear when the poor pagans call for aid. Such would be a false peace, not the peace which Christ promised to the peacemakers who are ready to bring peace to others. When love is extinguished there can be no real peace. Let us therefore pray that Our Savior will find no soul who will fail to attain everlasting peace through our indifference and lack of sympathy.

*VIII. Blessed Are They Who Suffer Persecution
for Justice' Sake, for Theirs Is the Kingdom
of Heaven*

What a dreary departure was ours in 1905 when we left the smoking ruins of Kigonjera and set out for Lake Nyassa with a weeping crowd of Brothers and Sisters who were lamenting the destruction of all their hopes and of the home in which their whole heart was set! With the true spirit of self-sacrifice they had cultivated this portion of God's vineyard, and now their whole work was annihilated by the rebels. Their beloved Superior, Father Francis, had been torn away from his orphan flock by murderous hands. As they proceeded laboriously over the rough mountains, tears streamed down their cheeks as news of one horror after another reached them. At Liwale the Superior had been murdered with two Brothers and two Sisters, and their corpses were left on the desert sand to be devoured by hungry hyenas. The complaint of the rebels

against the Superior was his statement that they "should render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's." Two flourishing stations in the southern part of the mission had been reduced to ashes. Here one Sister lost her life, one of the Fathers an arm, and one Brother had his hand shattered. These latter, however, succeeded in conducting a small caravan of fugitives through marshes and thickets to the shore of the lake.

A great, joyfully ripening harvest was thus suddenly destroyed. Even where no lives had been lost, the mission buildings, which had been erected at great sacrifices, had been partially burned by the rebels, and a number of schools, in which true-hearted children had learned a love of virtue from the lips of their teachers, had been reduced to heaps of ashes. Charitable institutions, where thousands of sick Christians and pagans had sought relief and received medicines for their sick bodies and words of consolation for still sicker souls, were deserted. The words of love, which had brought so many pagans to the mission church to discover the source of this affection, were succeeded by the clash of arms and wild battle-cries. The wickedness of the magician had stifled the sense of justice in the natives, and made them forget the kindness they had received.

As, during our difficult journey, I pondered over this turn of affairs, my heart grew heavy,

and all the bitter criticisms uttered at home about the missions come back to me: "Why should we support the missions when at one blow everything may be annihilated?" Such a criticism, of course, is neither charitable nor just, for all was not annihilated. But the man who first voiced it and the others who repeated it have not heard the jubilant hymn with which the martyrs were received above in heaven: "Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice' sake."

A few months later I knelt before the Holy Father in Rome. His kindly eyes were filled with tears as I told him of all the trials which had overtaken our mission. During our flight to Nyassa we were accompanied by a crowd of catechumens, since there were no adult Christians at the new station of Kigonzera. These good loyal folk had for our sake left their families and all their possessions to an uncertain fate. They carried our necessary baggage as far as the lake, running the risk that during their absence their huts would be plundered and burned and their fields laid waste. On reaching the lake I sorrowfully sent these brave souls back to their mountains. On the way home, however, they were attacked by the rebels and many of them slain because they had helped us to escape.

With deep emotion in his voice, the Holy Father said: "They have received their baptism of blood. Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Christ's Church rises up from the ruins under which the enemies of truth seek to bury it. Blood and tears are the cement which binds the stones of the edifice together. Tedious and difficult is the task of carving these stones so that they will fit together. The Church describes this work in touching and consoling words as follows:

Tunſionibus preſſuris
Expoliti lapides
Suis coaptantur locis

Per manus artificis
Disponuntur permansuri
Sacris aedificiis.*

Our Savior with His Cross dug the first foundations of His Church. The apostles surveyed the ground, passing from land to land until the persecutors of the Christians blocked their passage. The surveyors' chains were then taken from their dead hands by others whom death claimed in turn. The Catacombs erected the foundations of the Church, and with what rivers of blood were these consecrated! The world was fain to take the view that so much blood must loosen the earth about the foundations and that the projected edifice must thus fall down, involving all the workers in its ruins. The world wished to have nothing to do with the lost cause. The blood of the martyrs, however, proved itself an iron

* First with hammer and with chisel
The stones are carefully prepared.
The skilful builder then disposes
Each in its appointed place,
Rearing an enduring dwelling
For th' Incarnate Lord of Hosts.

stratum which lent solidity to the foundations of the edifice, and, under the pressure of the persecutions, the workers labored all the more diligently, esteeming themselves fortunate if they also could with their blood lend greater security to the building.

It is an extraordinary fact that wherever the Church and her apostles established themselves in the course of the centuries, we encounter the selfsame history of early bloody persecutions. This same phenomenon recurs whether the missionaries with the Cross in their hands penetrate into the dark forests of Germany, or encounter the most savage foe of Christianity, the Turk; whether they endeavor to win the wild tribes of America by their gentle doctrine for the God of love, or seek to bring the blessing of truth to the smiling island kingdom of Japan; whether they ignore the laws of the "enclosed land" to announce the higher laws of the Lord of heaven, or disembark with their Savior on the most remote islands of the ocean. The court of the negro King of Uganda proved to be a place of execution for the true followers of Christ. The cliffs near Nagasaki in Japan saw the blood of Christians run down in torrents to the foaming sea. The Christian religion was instituted in Corea over the bodies of the martyrs; shepherd and flock supplied the building stone in such abundance that the structure is today an imposing one. The mark of the Church Militant was at all times that

every inch of soil had to be won in heroic battle, and its champions had to defend the Christian cause with their lives. How much church property, justly acquired, has been destroyed in sheer folly or as a result of the over-clever but mistaken calculations of the enemies of Christianity, pagan and neo-pagan! How often has right been trodden under foot from the day when the profligate Nero set fire to Rome to stir up hatred against the Christians! The later trials of the Church included the occupation of the Holy Land by the Turks, the Thirty Years' War, and more recently the policy of secularization which resulted in the indefensible destruction of churches and monasteries and the sale of their property at confiscatory valuations. In very recent times, indeed, the robbers of the Church have not restrained their hands from pious legacies or from the inviolable rights of the dead, who can no longer defend themselves.

Have all the pious gifts which were destroyed in such eras of persecution lost their value and efficacy for the giver and founder? Or, in addition to the reward which their own fidelity merits, will God grant them a special blessing, because they also have encountered the cruel blows of violence, and must therefore be included amongst the persecuted to whom Our Savior has promised a special share in the kingdom of heaven? The blessed peace which did not desert the martyrs in their torments or even at death, opened the

eyes of many a persecutor, and a new kingdom of heaven was won in his soul. But what of the others? Even in Christian antiquity a cultured historian had already written a treatise entitled: "De mortibus persecutorum" (How the Persecutors Died). One would have to write a thick volume if one wished to continue this treatise down to the present day.

Think of the consolation which hundreds, thousands, and millions received in such little mission churches before profligate hands set them ablaze. Think of the loving care which numberless children found in the mission schools before wickedness laid them in ruins. The native assistant teacher, Xavier, had rendered most faithful service for years in return for the miserable sum of one dollar a month before the spear of a rebel had put a stop to his work in 1905. His work was interrupted, but the seeds of Christianity which he sowed in the minds of the children are now blossoming and promise a rich harvest. Outside Mombasa stands an ancient venerable ruin, washed by the waters of the lake and sheltered by rustling palms. The ruin, which dates from the Portuguese era, was once a glorious church. Centuries have passed over the ruin since the Arabs destroyed the church, but the negroes who found salvation there now rejoice in heaven and thank the valiant missionaries and all who contributed to their happiness.

Over all these ruins, graves, and deserted places shines the inscription: "Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake." Why can we not decipher it? Because we trust too much to our natural eyes. With such tears as only a child sheds for a beloved father, the Indians had to witness the departure of the Fathers of the Society of Jesus when the godless and powerful administration of Pombal tore the Fathers from their beloved flock, and shipped them like cattle to Spain. Even if a short-sighted administration blinded by hate could, to its own detriment, hamper good for a time, the blessed effects of missionary zeal were later to be shown by the Reductions; the good which had been already done, could not be undone by another's inhumanity and hatred of God. Perhaps these conscienceless enemies of the Church regretted they could not entirely overthrow the work of the missionaries, but thousands of Indians for whom the Reductions were the gate to heaven enjoyed the happiness which the good Fathers had brought them, and of which the passion of a ruler would fain have robbed them.

To lament and weep over the ruins of our destroyed hopes is no shame. When a missionary sees the result of so much labor destroyed, when he sees himself compelled to fly from his scattered flock, his heart almost breaks with bitter grief. The bitterest blow is the one of pagans or unbelievers in their fanatical rage striking down the

pastors, hoping thus to subdue the flock the more easily. But grief and tears must continue only for a time. We must then dry our tears and think of rebuilding. The shepherd must arise and again collect his flock. Then is the moment when he must pray that God will send new laborers into the vineyard who, with the same spirit of self-sacrifice, will devote their lives to the cause of Christ and the salvation of souls. The cause of Christ is never a forlorn one, least of all when we place ourselves under the protection of the Cross.

Martyrs are the state witnesses who testify to the indestructibility of the Church and the truth of Our Savior's promise: "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Thank God, every missionary order or society and every missionary country can offer such witnesses, and these assure the Christian people: "Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Who would dare estimate the full fruit of missionary sacrifices? In heaven, before the Eternal Judge, lies a book in which everything is entered. One day we shall see this book, and read and wonder, and wonder and read.

III. THE "ROMANTICISM" OF MISSION LIFE

One of those winter evenings which stretch a curtain of clouds across the valley and quickly obscure the sun from view had driven us students of the boys' seminary from the playgrounds, where we had been as zealously engaged as if a kingdom were at stake. A great deal, indeed, was at stake on the game, for boyish honor required us to face boldly the whizzing snowball and not to flinch at every shot that flew by us, or to show surly resentment when struck in the ear. My friend and I had waged a stern fight against each other. We had known each other for a long time, our friendship extending back to the days when we had shared together the first joys and sorrows of study in a little narrow classroom. We were now together again at the boys' seminary. On the way home we were discussing heroism in battle. Just when I was in the middle of a sentence, my friend interrupted me with the question: "What do you intend to be?" I was so carried away by the excitement of our late combat that I then disclosed the secret of my heart—a secret into which even my friend had not previously ventured to inquire.

"I mean to become a missionary," I answered.

"I have long thought so," he said. "This comes from the Indian stories which you used to love to read. Do you know that these Indian stories make one man an adventurer and a second, if fortune favors him, an explorer? But

you wish to be a missionary. The romanticism of the strange and the adventures of the wilderness entice you forth. Your imagination is still full of Indian stories. A trapper who scours the hills with his gun and drives off the Redskins does not attract your gentle disposition, but the romantic spirit which drove the trapper from his peaceful home is inclining you towards the missionary life."

This sounded like an exhortation intended to dissuade me from my carefully concealed plan, which he quite naturally thought was merely the result of an over-excited imagination. All our recent excitement over our sham battle was now gone, and was succeeded by a discussion of a more serious character. My friend's argument, based on the romantic life and man's thirst for adventure, seemed unanswerable.

This was the first time I heard the criticism that missionaries yielded only to the allurements of the strange and the romantic. Long years elapsed before I entered the mission house, and during these years I kept silent as to my intention. At times, it is true, my enthusiasm for the missions was revealed in my conversation, and on such occasions I frequently met with the old objection: "Missionaries are only a higher type of adventurers. Most of them are adverse to serious study, and their active spirits, associated with religious enthusiasm, lead them finally to a mission house."

That was more than twenty-five years ago. It is possible that, in some few mission houses, so close attention was not then paid to studies as now. But nowadays in mission houses and cloisters there is no place for students who will not apply themselves earnestly to their work. On the contrary, after much deliberation, it has come to be clearly recognized that missionaries, who are to a great extent thrown on their own resources and can only seldom obtain the advice of more experienced brethren, must have a most thorough training for their calling. It is customary to combine the intellectual training of most missionaries with strenuous physical labor, but this is only an additional reason why their theoretical preparations should be all the more fundamental. We wish to speak here of this system of training and its great attractive power, which nevertheless has a sobering effect on over-enthusiastic spirits consumed with a longing for change and the excitement of strange lands. In the first place, there is the stern seriousness of the studies and the rigid examinations that must be passed. No lowering of the standard is considered for any student, and, according as the students advance in their studies, their examinations grow more searching and their spiritual and corporal exercises are multiplied. Those who desire soft comfort will soon seek other havens, and the restless spirit will quickly withdraw in complete disillusion. Persons of this nature will never attain the goal which can be reached only

after the most strenuous effort. The grace of a vocation is certainly accompanied by the proper natural dispositions. Usually it will not seek to bring a recluse out into the wide field where laborious journeys bring such a quick succession of dangers, mortifications, and bitter sorrows as are found in poor mission stations. The natural impulse, which regards difficulties not as insuperable obstacles, but as something to be borne or overcome, will show itself during its preparation for the priesthood and in the monastery, even though the student is possessed by a passionate longing to begin his labor in far-off lands.

Such were also my views at the time. Meanwhile the years passed rapidly until finally I entered St. Ottilien. In the interval, however, I had never forgotten my friend's words. On the contrary, a time was to arrive when they were to stand out before my soul in all their clearness—during long hours and days of marching through swamps, days when I shook and tottered with fever, days when my sick body broke down by the wayside, weeks when I lay in my sick-room, periods of extreme homesickness when all hopes seemed shattered, when the whole future seemed disconsolate and dreary to my tear-dimmed eyes, and the work of years was apparently annihilated. If there were any romanticism in my attitude towards mission life, it would then undoubtedly have been disillusioned. Under such trials faith alone and a supernatural ideal could

have given me strength. Between twenty and twenty-five years had passed, bringing their lessons and experiences, since I had had an Indian story in my hands.

Strong ideals must be forged in fidelity. Nothing tests us or strengthens us better than fidelity in small things. The missionary's work consists of petty tasks; petty tasks develop the idealism which will venture on greater things. Our Divine Savior testifies to this. On one occasion Jesus was traveling with His disciples over the burning roads which led to Jericho. His feet were covered with dust; perspiration covered His tired features. He was hungry and faint from the heat and from His exertions. The city, however, is now near at hand, and the inhabitants expect the kind Worker of Miracles. People line the edge of the road, and, as the news of His arrival spreads, new throngs flock to meet Him. They all wish to escort Him in triumphal procession into the city, confidently expecting new miracles. Everyone wishes to see Him and to snatch a word of conversation with Him. All hope that they will be witnesses of a miracle. Our Savior pauses on the road. Is He about to gratify their wish? He is, but in a way that they do not suspect. There is not a word or a sound from the crowd as the procession halts under a fig-tree. In the lower branches of the tree, resting on a fork a little distance above the ground, stands a low-sized man. From this vantage-point

he can see the Savior, whose eyes are fixed on his. "Zacchaeus," said Jesus, "make haste and come down; for this day I must abide in thy house." Zacchaeus climbs down joyfully, and accompanies his guest. Jesus does not seem to hear the murmurs of the people, and those who have been attracted merely by curiosity to see Him, return disappointed to their homes. The miracle which was begun under the fig-tree had escaped their attention. "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor," declared the converted publican; "and if I have wronged any man of anything, I restore him fourfold . . . If Thou wilt accept me, I shall give up all and follow Thee." This was one of the small tasks of the Messiah, but the Son of God did not despise it. The world demands magnificence, and wishes to see brilliant successes, and yet the work of saving souls consists mostly of little tasks—especially missionary work, which romanticism only hampers.

There are many little tasks to be done in the broad field of the missions. The labor of many workers is sown deep in the pagan soil, and must be covered up for some time before it germinates and bears fruit. The pagan soul has to undergo a long transformation before it has even a general conception of sin, before the longing to relieve its guilt-laden conscience overtakes it, before it is sufficiently stirred to resolve upon a change of life. To work this change in a pagan soul demands an heroic patience, which seeks encourage-

ment, not in the figures shown in statistical tables, but in the gentle heart of Jesus. Rightly are the eyes of the missionary fastened on this Exemplar. In feature after feature, the life of Christ can be taken as the prototype for the missionary's. The life of the missionary is one of obedience, love, and sacrifice. As soon as the lively boy enters the seminary or the cheerful youth the mission house, leaving his father and mother and resigning the comfort and pleasures of life, the Cross is planted in his heart. He does not for this reason become sad or discontented, but, on the contrary, a previously unrealized longing for the self-denying life of the mission grows within him year by year. Notwithstanding his impatience, the years of preparation pass quickly by. He encounters, indeed, many hard, dark hours—hours of trial in which his soul seems inclined to weaken at the prospect of the long thorny path of self-denial before him. Grace, however, conquers, and his peaceful joy in his vocation increases. Frequently the young candidate finds it irksome to study all the books and to work through all the years of study which, mistakenly perhaps in his opinion, the Superiors have declared necessary. The impetuosity of youth can scarcely restrain itself any longer. These sacrifices, however, must also be made. The interior storms, which shake every man's soul, must likewise be borne valiantly. Clinging to their noble vocation, they must brave the raging waves which threaten to overcome them and carry them out into the wild sea of the

world. It is not easy to struggle to the safe haven of the holy vows, where they are anchored securely in God and in obedience to their Superiors.

The young missionary now stands on the steamship which has for some weeks been carrying him towards a distant and strange world. He sees the coasts of his future home, and tears stream down his cheeks. These are not the tears which he concealed when his weeping father and mother embraced him on his departure. These tears he cannot conceal, for they are tears of joy because he has at last attained his goal, and can now work for His Savior and the salvation of immortal souls.

Work indeed awaits him, work accompanied by worry, sorrow, and sufferings. Man's heart is so weak and his body so frail! Discouragement will steal into his soul when the missionary has done his utmost, and it would seem that all has been done in vain. Herein lies the hardest trial. "Work without despairing," is the advice tendered by a spiritual writer of our time. This beautiful saying might well be paraphrased as follows: "Trust in God!"

When Our Savior entered on His last journey, there were only very few of His little train that followed Him. Near the end, when His throbbing eyes looked down from the Cross, all His disciples had fled but John, who stood alone beside Our Lady. Yet, with His dying lips, Jesus

proclaimed victoriously to the world: "Consummatum est" (The work of salvation is completed).

If modern critics had stood under the foot of the Cross of Our Savior, whom one of His disciples had betrayed, and if they had seen His little flock scattered, they would without doubt have absolutely despaired of the future of His work.

Yet it is only in the Cross, which serves as his sign-post, that the missionary can find guidance in his work. The clear stamp of the Cross must be impressed on all his works: "The disciple is not above the master." This stamp showed clearly in the work of the apostles, and it can be traced through all the Christian persecutions down to modern times, which, as St. Ignatius says, "tried to annihilate the Christian fold together with its head." This stamp of the Cross also distinguishes the great persecutions in Uganda and Corea. In China also, during the Boxer Rebellion of 1900, no fewer than forty-five missionaries and nine Sisters testified with their blood to the holy purpose of missionary work. How many missionaries must have died amid tortures for their Faith and their sacred duty in the course of the development of the Church! The sword of the persecutor, indeed, was never allowed to rust in its sheath. The blood which stained this sword might dry somewhat during a period of sober afterthought and more humane

feelings, but suddenly the persecutions would break out again. Hate and rage, fostered by Satan, ever demand the blood of heroic champions of the Cross. Heroic strength of soul was shown by Blessed Perboyre during the time of his preparation for the missions when he prayed daily during Mass for the grace of martyrdom. It was also heroic strength of soul, and not fanaticism, which he displayed when he hung from the cross in Cochinchina and was murdered by the bailiffs. There are many such high-souled men, all of whom when they embrace a missionary life make their profession earnestly and uprightly: "I am ready to sacrifice my life for my sheep, since I wish to be a good shepherd and not a hireling." Many of them attain this enviable fate. And what of the others who do not attain this high destiny? Their lives also bear the seal of the Cross. They are lives for Christ, a fight for His kingdom, an open warfare to rescue souls from hell.

The last pages of the diary which I kept during my visit to Africa in 1912 may furnish some illustrations on this point. Should these pages fall into the hands of missionaries, they may throw them aside, since they contain nothing which they themselves have not experienced many times.

After a most uncomfortable journey through drenching sedge, and wet to the skin by heavy rain-storms, we succeeded in reaching Mponda.

This village, however, was still at some distance from our longed-for goal—the station of Kwiro, which was situated on the high plateau of Mahenga. The unfavorable weather, which had been so trying on our retinue for ten successive days, was not the only thing we had to contend with on our journey. A still more grievous care beset us as, for the three preceding days, our thirty-five bearers had had nothing to eat. We had received firm assurance that there were plenty of towns along the way where we could purchase food for our train; but either the ungodly recruiting of laborers, which eats like a cancer into the already attenuated population of African colonies, had swept away the men of these towns into new slavery, or else, on the approach of the recruiting bands during the previous summer, the people had burned their huts and crops and fled to a territory where, for a time at least, they were safe from forcible recruiting.

Fatigued and hungry we arrived at Mponda, and were fortunate in being able to purchase his entire stock from a visiting merchant. We could thus give enough food to our people to enable them to recover their strength. We could have obtained absolutely nothing from the few inhabitants who had established themselves in the ruined huts of a deserted military station, and were themselves suffering from hunger.

Evening brought on one of those terrible tropical storms which pour down water like a gigantic fountain. A new danger now threatened us. The fatigue and run-down condition of our people had made it impossible for us to proceed beyond Mponda, and now the road thither was blocked. Before us lay the Lohombero, whose swollen waters had overrun its banks to the extent of two kilometers, and were rising higher and higher.

On the following morning, water covered the land as far as the eye could reach, foaming through the marshy thickets and extending across the road which led to our destination. We comforted ourselves at first with the thought that the waters would subside by midday. But, instead of subsiding, they continued to rise, and every hour increased the danger that we would be left stranded where we were and die of starvation.

"We must cross the valley," I declared. "Another storm will break in the afternoon, and swell the flood still further. Here in Mponda we can get nothing to eat; it is useless to return to the uninhabited woods through which we have passed. Across the valley, therefore, lies our only hope."

We are soon struggling through the deep mud and later through the treacherous waters. Now one of our party sinks in a hole hollowed out by a hippopotamus in the soft ground. Later we trip over a concealed plank—a remnant of the long bridge which was swept away by the flood some years before. Again our feet are caught in creep-

ing vines, which threaten to submerge us in the murmuring flood.

Finally, after endless effort, we reach the proper banks of the river, which sweeps by roaring and hissing. We fire a few shots to frighten away the lurking crocodiles, and then, having tied our tent-ropes together, we give one end to a powerful negro from the Coast, directing him to swim to the opposite bank and tie it to a tree. This accomplished, we all enter the raging flood, and after a long struggle reach the other side.

Some may call this incident romantic. More of this "romance" awaited us on the other shore, as we struggled forward for days through water and mud, wet to the skin.

Once the rainy season sets in, many missionaries must live in such "romantic" conditions for weeks, as they pay their daily visits to the schools and to the sick. When your shoes are filled with water for a week at a time; when not a particle of your clothes is dry, and the little chest, carried by your attendant, is covered with mould, rust, and dirt, your only desire is to have done with such "romanticism." Duty alone makes the missionary content to follow this path, waiting for his clothes to dry of themselves. A little while later, the blazing sun appears again, and the parched tongue clamors for water.

The long-continued journeys through the water finally told on my constitution, and one of the last rain-storms brought on pleurisy. By strenuous marching, I succeeded in sweating it out of

my system, although it was only by a supreme exertion that I could at times keep on my feet. Just as we began the steep ascent of the Matumbi Mountains, I had the first tidings of the approach of that most unwelcome tropical visitor—fever. How often I sank down completely exhausted under a projecting rock or a bush, which gave me kindly shade for a few moments! After this short rest, I had to rise and continue my journey until my throbbing heart again refused service. The whole “romance” of this ascent, which had been so rapturously pictured to me, was hidden by the gloomy veil of my fever.

Finally, I reached the mission station of Kipatimu, the end of my journey. I had already seen very humble mission houses, but never one so wretched as this, which would not compare favorably even with a native hut. However, I found at least rest and convalescence there.

The days sped quickly by, and I had to prepare for the descent from the mountain and my return home, for with Kipatimu ended my visitation of our missionary stations in the large Vicariate of Dar-es-Salaam. But now another incident occurred which impressed me still more deeply with the “romantic” side of mission life, and was an unfortunate finale for my whole journey. Overnight a deep, festering inflammation appeared on my left foot and also on my right thigh. I could not delay, however, as I had to reach the steamer at Kilwa. I was thus forced to take a wretched departure in a hurriedly con-

structed litter. Through the stifling heat and beating rain, the bearers carried me quickly down to the valley, and four days later our train reached Kilwa. A week later I was lying quietly in my sick-room at Dar-es-Salaam, recovering from the fever of the wounds and the deep surgical incisions which they necessitated. The physical pain had subsided, but was succeeded by a grief for the trials of others.

Above in Matumbi I had left one of our Brothers seriously ill. He had not been quite half a year engaged in missionary work, but a violent fever seized him in all his youthful vigor, and snatched him away from the work which he had so joyfully begun. The report of his death had reached Dar-es-Salaam before my arrival, and was followed by other mournful news. Only a few weeks before Father Bernward had told me of his hopes and plans. He was a priest who, filled with the glowing zeal of youth, found no way too difficult, no hut too wretched, no school too distant to visit, and no exertion too great. To hear him tell of his mission journeys and his missionary plans was a deep joy. And now, within three short weeks, all his bright plans were dissipated by death, which in these tropical lands interrupts work so suddenly and unexpectedly. This zealous missionary had not been quite two years at work, when his life's activities were ended at the age of twenty-seven.

These are other instances of the "romanticism" of mission life. Is this "romanticism" cal-

culated to attract enthusiasts? Only warm hearts which glow with love for our pagan brethren, a magnanimous spirit of self-sacrifice, and a strong, lively faith, will undertake such uninviting work and faithfully persevere in it to the end.

If you would care to enter a light reindeer sleigh and proceed to the extreme North, you can visit "the mission chapels constructed out of ice blocks by the poor Eskimos, into whose gloomy lives the light of the Christian Faith sends its saving and life-giving beams." In this clime, also, the gaily woven cloak of "romanticism" will lose its magical lustre; stern reality alone remains, transfigured indeed by the heroic self-sacrifice and pure spiritual enthusiasm of the missionaries.

Consuming charity alone can make the life of the missionaries intelligible.

On practically all my journeys through the world—over the ocean, during my travels through the African bush, and in the Far East—I have met some man whom either business or an exploring spirit had conducted to foreign lands. The conversation would naturally turn to the missions, and finally the following question would ever emerge: "But why do you go out on the missions? Why preach to these savages and backward tribes the doctrines of Christianity, which are so foreign to their manner of life and their ancient traditional views?" Very frequently, this same question is put still more pointedly: "Who gives you the right to disturb

the peaceful religious practices of pagans who are quite content with their natural condition, or of Mohammedans who have a religion much more suited to tropical climes?"

We usually began our discussion with the cultural blessings which Christianity has conferred on all Europe—blessings which are still enjoyed even by those who have long since broken with Christianity. Consequently, there is every reason to expect that Christianity would also raise the backward races to a higher stage of human culture. In so far as the culture of Islam is concerned, it was but a passing glimmer, which quickly waned and was extinguished. But wherever Christianity established itself in its fresh vigor, and permeated the life of the people, the civilization which it introduced remained at a high level. And this is one of the highest objects of mankind—to develop a higher civilization. It therefore follows that one of the chief duties of men is to exchange their cultural advances. Consequently, when the missionaries plant the evergreen roots of Christianity in sunk-en peoples, they must be regarded as working in the front ranks of the pioneers of civilization. This is indeed admitted by all whose judgment is not warped by the very mention of religion or Christianity.

The conversation often turned to the work done by the missionaries in colonial territories. Whenever a nation assumes control of a more backward land, it is bound to impress upon the

latter its higher civilization. This is all the more imperative when the relation between the two countries is that of mother and child, as occurs in the case of a new colonization. The child must then adopt the character of its mother, and, however individual representatives of the motherland may betray its spirit abroad, this spirit is really the Christian one—or at least the inheritance of the Christian epoch.

Ideally constituted hearts seek to share with all others the happiness and peace which they themselves enjoy. They seek especially to share them with those who have had little or none of their good fortune, who find nothing to elevate their souls in their depraved fetich-worship, who have nowhere to seek consolation in the sufferings and sorrows of life, and whose prospect after death is so dreary and sad. The sympathy of truly Christian hearts embraces the whole world. To make others happy, constitutes their happiness; to raise others from the depths of unworthy conceptions of life to a higher moral plane and to a new and nobler conception of human destiny, takes on increased importance in such noble minds. The charity of such souls is universal; for them there are no boundaries, no distinction of nationalities; they regard it as their duty to serve and to help all their brothers and sisters in the one great human family, and they can find no rest until they have done all in their power to bring help to their backward, weak, and helpless brethren. This is no sentimental love which

pampers the natives. It is a love which feels itself strong enough to leap into the ocean wherein souls are perishing and drag them safely to the shore.

All these explanations, however, failed to satisfy completely either him who asked for the justification of the missions or myself. We had finally to turn our conversation to Christ Himself. On one occasion He stood before His disciples—"the Galileans whom He had called from fishing-boat or the plough or the toll-house on the edge of the road . . . Plain, simple men, their thoughts did not extend much beyond the blue expanse of the lake or the distant horizon of the ripe golden grain-fields of their home until the day came when the Master with irresistible power of attraction called each of them to follow Him. And, as the Master stood before His disciples, he looked on them and said: 'All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Teach them to observe all things that I have commanded you, and behold, I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world.'"
(Dr. Klug.)

Our Savior has spoken the commandment of God. His all-merciful love asks for our co-operation. No one can refuse this appeal without relinquishing His love. Our Savior's wish is so clearly expressed that we can offer no pretext for ignoring it. Consequently, the final justifica-

tion of the missions does not lie in the human heart, however sympathetic, tender, and anxious to help it may be, nor in an inspiring romanticism; its justification lies in the unfathomable heart of Our Savior who would draw all men to Him. The love of this Divine Heart and its quest for men's souls must continue to the end of time; this Divine Heart pours the warmth of its affection into the hearts of its co-workers. God searches out these hearts that would collaborate in His work of redemption; He utilizes their natural gifts; but neither their dispositions nor their gifts are the determining factor. "God wills it," such has always been the highest motive of the missions, and the only safe anchorage from which the missionary can set out. This motive gives the firm assurance that the missionary is not sailing on an uncharted sea of romanticism, but is fulfilling an obligation with unshaken confidence in God.

"God wills it." We therefore cannot refuse our co-operation in the execution of His most holy will. We may not regard participation in this work as a matter of personal feelings or esteem it the "enthusiasm of visionary minds." God earnestly desires the promotion of the missions, and we must therefore co-operate with His desire. One day Our Divine Savior will ask His disciples and followers whether they have promoted this work which lies so close to His heart with upright will, with active faith, and with self-denying charity.

Easter Alleluias

 NEW movement in aid of the missions is traversing the country this Easter, while the spring breeze is laden with aroma from the budding trees and flowers. Amid this sweet fragrance and with the sacred tolling of bells the Easter Alleluias are sung in gratitude to Our Risen Savior for raising us to a new life and for giving us the grace to lead others to the Easter peace which we enjoy—the happy resurrection of souls. The fervor of this new movement is without precedent in our land. One might compare it to that extraordinary phenomenon in history which occurred seven hundred years ago, in the year 1212. The resounding cry, “God wills it,” then inflamed thousands of our boys and youths to don helmet and breastplate, to seek a light sword and to set out in the “Children’s Crusade” to the Holy Land for the purpose of rescuing the Holy Places from unbelievers. From their fathers, who had fallen in the attack on the Holy City, they had inherited knightly valor and, like their noble lords and faithful esquires, their hearts were filled with the thought: “It is for the honor of God and of the Christian West.”

An army is preparing itself to battle for Christ. The battle-cry is resounding throughout the land. For the honor of God and Christ's kingdom, the companies are ready to wage battle on distant fields so that the Cross may attain its final victory. At home the spiritual armories are filled. What strenuous preparation and joyous expectation are visible in the mission houses. In holy impatience they await the final review and the order to depart for the field of battle. Every eye shines with the fire of youth as in hundreds and thousands they pass before the Divine General in the Blessed Sacrament, pledging their fealty: "Ecce adsum; mitte me" (Lo! here I am; send me forth). Behind these heroic champions of God stand hundreds of thousands and millions of members belonging to the missionary societies who all wish to share in the triumphal march of the Savior over the earth.

The missionary spirit had long burned in our land before the present movement in aid of the world missions began. It had burned, however, chiefly in those receptive hearts which have a natural and peculiarly tender understanding of the love of Our Savior—in the hearts of the children. The little ones had formed themselves into the Holy Childhood Association, offering up together with their gifts their childish hearts. Their prayers and pennies saved were offered to help the pagan children. As soon as their hearts had grasped the full significance of this beautiful

purpose, the children of our country surpassed those of all other nations in the spirit of self-sacrifice. They contributed more than one-third of the \$600,000 which was annually collected by the Association.

How many children's souls have been redeemed for heaven through such love of our children at home, and must now surround the throne of God, beseeching Him with grateful hearts to reward their little saviors! And, in consequence, how many graces and blessings must be poured into our children's hearts, protecting their innocence and confirming their faith so that, as the years pass by, its strength may increase in this faithless and dangerous age! We have only one ground for complaint, namely, that when they leave school, these children do not join in a body one of the great societies for the propagation of the faith which aim at gathering adults of all lands into one great Catholic league against unbelief.

In December, 1912, I delivered a mission address to the alumni of an ecclesiastical seminary. I had to express my amazement at the astonishing sums which the children of the diocese had contributed for the propagation of the faith. The Right Reverend Bishop seized upon the occasion to urge his alumni to the faithful promotion of the missionary spirit when they were later active in the care of souls.

"I am delighted," said he, "that so much is done in my diocese for the missions, but it is not nearly so much as it might be. If all who understand and sympathize with Catholic needs had their attention called to the anxiety of the Church for her most forlorn children, and if they could be brought to a correct appreciation of the missions, the contribution from my diocese could easily be increased tenfold."

The offerings made for the support of the missions are indeed large, but they are scarcely anything in comparison with what is spent on drink in money, health, and labor. Is it right, therefore, for us to regard the mission offerings as burdensome, pleading that we can scarcely afford them? The contributions are large, but the sum is always too small. The world must become Catholic. Such is Our Savior's will, and who except Catholics can comprehend this will and bring about its accomplishment? Much is accomplished, especially by the Catholic women, who grasp ideals more quickly. With self-sacrificing spirit they labor on, despite discouragements, and gradually extend the ministrations of their tender noble love. What great things have been accomplished by the Countess Ledochowska during the twenty-five years' existence of the St. Peter Claver Sodality. A whole network of branches, affiliated with headquarters in Rome, brings together in one movement all the friends and patrons of the African missions. Another

untiring band of heroic women workers from every station in life and from all parts of our country are gathered together in the powerful "Missionary Association of Catholic Women." This association supplies money and vestments to the missionaries scattered throughout the world.

If the 200,000 members of this association and all the helpers of Countess Ledochowska display such tireless activity and ready self-sacrifice for the cause of Christ, one may well ask: "But where are the men? Do they mean to remain at home during the Crusade and allow the women and children to go forth to the fight? Could not the Catholic men form themselves into a great missionary society for mutual encouragement? Their example would implant in the receptive hearts of their children enthusiasm for the Faith, high ideals, a noble Christian outlook, and a strong moral character." Why are the men backward in this work? Is this work merely a matter of feelings? No, a thousand times, no! It is a matter of conviction, a matter of faith.

"Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat" (Christ conquers, Christ reigns, Christ commands) are the words carved on the obelisk on the Piazzo di San Pietro in Rome, which was erected as a trophy of victory over the pagan empire of Rome. Christ has conquered, and His conquests still continue. He had to chastise our obstinate pagan ancestors with the cross-sword,

and we now thank Him for it. Christ rules over us as long as we cling to the Cross with manly faith. *Christus imperat*. But He also orders us to stand up manfully for His sacred interests. As Leader, He summons His faithful ones around Him. Will He be forced to make long supplications and vividly picture the necessities and miseries of pagandom before He can soften the hearts of Christians? When Our Divine Master calls, surely the only answer we can make is to renew our oath of fealty. His appeal to all those who stand with Him in the fight is a touching one: "Everyone that shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven." If, moved by sincere faith, we participate in the missionary movements, and support them by word and example and with self-sacrificing enthusiasm, we shall indeed be confessing Him before all men. To ignore Christ's interest in immortal souls is too often equivalent to denying it, which in turn is almost tantamount to a denial of Christ Himself.

I have, however, been unjust to the men if I have created the impression that they have deserted the battlefield of the missions. They are, on the contrary, advancing to the fight. Some of the noblest spirits in our universities have already pledged themselves to carry the Cross to victory through the world. Although the associations are only of recent formation, they have already fostered in the minds of the students a

love for the missions. The champions of the Cross are themselves young, but their hearts burn with enthusiasm for the kingdom of God. In Muenster alone over six hundred students belong to the association, and the holy fire which was enkindled in their hearts has spread out to other lands. Two Austrian universities, Olmuetz and Leitmeritz, have followed the lead of the German universities. On several occasions I have spoken before those noble champions of spiritual things, and have noticed how their eyes brightened at every mention of the Catholic missions.

All these mission societies have a double task to fulfil. One consists in collecting the contributions which are such as can be easily made by all members. In scarcely any of the associations is the yearly contribution more than twenty-five cents. This is not even a cent a week, and much less than the cost of a glass of beer per month. This simple comparison should shame thousands and millions of persons, since it leaves them no pretext for their failure to participate in the saving of those immortal souls which are perishing of spiritual hunger and thirst.

We have mentioned above definite figures. If one estimates the sums contributed by the various associations, it might seem to amount to a very large figure. Someone might then ask the question: "What do the missions do with so much money?" Let us see if it is so much when the needs of the various missionary territories are

placed in the other scale. I do not intend to present a series of dry statistics. A simple sum in arithmetic, however, will raise the veil which conceals the grave necessities of the Catholic missions from those who concentrate their attention on the apparently vast sums contributed.

Our Vicariate Apostolic in East Africa covers a large territory, nearly four times as large as the state of New Jersey. It is large also from the standpoint of the blessed developments which have taken place there in the last few years. Its future, like the future of the African missions in general, depends on the school. Only isolated tribes among whom family relations are on a higher plane hold out any hope that the adults can be won in any great numbers for Christianity. Usually the missionaries have to rest content if, by the foundation and maintenance of schools, they can introduce Christian ideals into the souls of the children. They can then hope that, after two or three generations, the divine leaven will begin to exercise its full influence.

It is for this reason that the Catholic missions have devoted so much energy to the establishment of schools. The outlook is very consoling, as in our vicariate over fifteen thousand pupils are being instructed by about three hundred native teachers.

Let us estimate approximately the cost of these schools. The salaries of the teachers must be met exclusively by our missions. It is only

in very recent times that the question of government aid was even suggested. To expect any support from the natives themselves, is out of the question. Each of the three hundred teachers receives about two dollars a month—surely a very modest allowance, yet the annual cost of the native teachers alone is about seven thousand dollars. But, besides the native catechists, there are the hundreds of sick who come daily to the missions, and the lepers who number more than one thousand in the vicariate. Again, school buildings have to be erected and maintained, however poorly equipped these may be, and provision made for the support and health of the actual personnel of the mission, who must be regarded as the most important factor in missionary work, after, of course, the omnipotent mercy of God. Then, the cost of the missionary's outfit and his traveling expenses from home must be considered; other expenses are incurred in connection with the visitation of the schools by the missionaries and the Confirmation tour of the Vicar Apostolic. Should we then wonder that bitter want is an only too frequent guest of the missionaries, and that sad thoughts accompany the Fathers on their journeys to the Christians and schools, which are situated in a wide circle around the mission station? He can take nothing with him to the sick and the poor. He has only consoling words to offer them, and how can they then understand his great love and the mortifications he is en-

during for their sake? However one may appraise the expenditure which is absolutely necessary if our mission is not to decline or even to collapse, this much is clear—the territory which we have been just now considering is only a tiny section of the great mission atlas of the Catholic Church. If, however, the means to support this mission are not forthcoming, if the missionaries are allowed to starve, and if the complaint is heard in all quarters that much good and useful work must be left undone, and that many pagans must be denied the blessings of Christianity because of insufficient means—if all these conditions prevail in our territory, the same complaint must be echoed a hundred or a thousand times from the other missionary fields. There is everywhere a lack, not only of what is desirable, but only too often also of necessities.

The object of the missions is clear, and that object lies beyond this earth. The missionary's eyes are indeed directed towards heaven, to which he seeks to conduct men's souls, but, so long as he is on this earth, he needs material soil under his own feet and those of his disciples. Even though the rough stones and the thorns are transfigured for the children of God, and even though their temporal needs are simpler and fewer, their fundamental needs are essentially the same as for others.

These necessities of life are supplied by the contributions collected by the associations which

support the missions and thus promote the development of the divine plan for the salvation of mankind. This, however, is not the exclusive task of the mission associations. It might indeed be regarded as too material if co-operation in a work so highly ideal and important as the missions were to be confined to the jingle of money. A greater value lies in the propagation of an interest and love for the missions. This propagation is extended to the widest circles through the missionary associations and periodicals, as well as through the inspirations from the missions themselves. Through the modest pamphlets and reports from the missions the poverty of the pagan world emerges and appeals to our merciful charity. Every offering given for the most forlorn of human children fans the fire of love in our hearts. In many a youthful heart this spark once lighted will continue to glow until it suddenly bursts into a flame which can be quenched only by a life devoted wholly to missionary work.

After the prayers which the members of these missionary associations send up to heaven for the conversion of pagans, the awakening of missionary vocations is probably the most glorious fruit of the labors of the Association of the Holy Childhood, the Students' Missionary Societies, and the small mission unions known as "Guards of Honor." "Guards of Honor" thy are very fitly called, for they zealously promote the honor of God.

Successes like these cannot be even estimated. They cannot be examined like ripe fruits on a tree. Spiritual fruits they are, which ripen concealed from our view. Perhaps a single word spoken in a mission sermon, the reading of a mission magazine, or long participation in a mission association, unveils a vocation. The ways of grace are mysterious. Blessed, however, are those who make level these ways, even though they are not fully conscious of the service they perform. One day they will realize it, and thank God for the grace of being allowed to participate in the work of His love.

But these vocations must be sought out, and trained for the work in the vineyard of the Lord. Thanks be to God, this has been done, and we are astonished like children who, on a warm morning in springtime, skip out on the soft, green carpet of the fields and wonder at the gay splendor of the flowers which until today the winter's snows have hidden from view. In the short period of three decades, the missions have passed from a cold, repulsive winter into a new spring, and on German territory alone no less than thirty-three mission monasteries, houses, and institutions, juvenates and seminaries have been established, besides nine convents which have been founded for missionary Sisters. All these institutions look up like flowers to heaven, raising their petition to God: "Thy Kingdom Come!" They await only the call of the Master: "Ite et vos in vineam meam" (Go ye also into My vineyard).

Up to thirty years ago there was not a single mission house to be found on German soil. Various Orders and Congregations had indeed ventured to the borders of Germany, hoping thus to enkindle the missionary spirit also in that land. Numbers of German youths crossed the border to Exaeten and Valkenburg, where the German Province of the Jesuits enrolled them for Zambezi (Africa) and India. In the Jesuit University of Bombay, that jewel of German scholarship abroad, many a German Jesuit found a quiet spot for fruitful labor.

In 1875 Steyl¹ (Holland) saw the dawn of a new missionary spirit, which was to develop rapidly, and was directed especially towards reviving an enthusiasm for the missions in Germany. Then appeared one missionary institution after another—first in Dutch Limburg where the Oblates of the Immaculate Conception established themselves in 1881, to be followed by the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in 1882, and the Priests of the Sacred Heart in 1883. The covering of ice and snow was soon removed in Germany also. Witnessing the vigorous developments in their immediate neighborhood, the old

¹ The Steyl Congregation (Society of the Divine Word) has since established an American Province and conducts at present five schools for the training of its missionaries: St. Mary's Mission House (College and Seminary), Techny, Ill.; Sacred Heart Mission House (College), Girard, Pa.; St. Francis Xavier's Mission House, Island Creek, Mass.; St. Augustine's Mission House (for Colored), Bay St. Louis, Miss.; The Novitiate, East Troy, Wis. St. Mary's Mission House, established February 2, 1909, is the first institution of its kind in the United States.

Orders revived their ancient missionary enthusiasm. The Benedictines in Germany re-entered the missionary field in 1884. From St. Ottilien developed a special missionary congregation distinct from the other twelve congregations of the Benedictine Order. In two other monasteries and crowded missionary seminaries and in two clericalates, this militia of Christ crowded around the banner of St. Benedict to preserve for the Benedictine Order and to hand down the glory which Christian Germany associated with the sons of St. Benedict as its first teachers. God has willed that, just as Germany owed its own faith to the Benedictines, the Benedictines should be the first in modern time to erect a missionary monastery on German soil. It was Germany's gratitude for the grace of the Faith and for the blessings which flowed over her from the Cross. Those who brought her the Faith were to be the first champions which Germany was to send out to carry the truths of salvation to the pagan world. The other Orders, however, quickly joined in the army of Christ. They all belong to the one Church Militant, whose picked warriors take the field in serried ranks to fight for God's kingdom against His enemies. In 1892 the Rhenish Province of the Capuchins was formed, and three monasteries now train missionaries for the Caroline and Mariana Islands. Since 1896 the Bavarian Capuchins from two monasteries have undertaken the missions in Chile. The love for Jesus and

for pagan souls which burned in the heart of the father of the Seraphic Order still inspires his sons. Since 1904 Franciscans from a number of monasteries in the Saxon Province have gone to China (Northern Shantung), Brazil and Japan, thus keeping alive in the great family of St. Francis their holy founder's zeal for souls and his longing for martyrdom.

While the old Orders were thus returning to the fight, a number of new missionary congregations were also entering the field. All wished to share in the battle and in the victory. All were of one heart and one mind. All had the same rallying cry: "God wills it."

Steyl founded two mission colleges on German soil, and the Oblates of the Immaculate Conception established one at Hünfeld, near Fulda, in 1895. In 1892 the Palottine Fathers established themselves at Limburg, and a little later established a second house at Ehrenbreitstein. In 1895 the Fathers of the Holy Ghost appeared on German soil, and established in quick succession four stations where valiant heroes could be assembled around the banner of Christ. The glorious mission house of Hilstrup, near Münster, was founded in 1896 by the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. In the same year the dauntless sons of Cardinal Lavigerie of the White Fathers appeared in Germany to enroll volunteers for the army of Our Savior who would serve their Divine Lord for no other reward than the sufferings and mortifications of missionary life to be

followed by eternal reward for their holy fealty. Since 1896 the White Fathers have established three mission houses in Germany. In 1900 the Marist Fathers established themselves at Meppen, and in 1902 the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales settled in the Rhineland.

The example of these heroic men was followed by high-souled women who wished to participate in the reward which Christ has promised for faithful love on the day when He assigns souls as a glorious retinue to those who brought them to God. Almost all the above mentioned modern orders have their special congregations for women, which assist in the work of the missions and devote themselves especially to the education of girls. The Daughters of St. Benedict, the Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo, St. Dominic, and St. Francis, the English Ladies and the Sisters of the Good Shepherd wish to join in the joys and sufferings of missionary work and to share with the men the happiness of helping to win souls for Christ. It is indeed a great, impressive army. The attack on the advance fortifications of the pagan world has begun. Paganism will withdraw into its huge fortresses — the populous kingdoms of the East, the dark primeval woods of Africa, where it shelters itself under fetich trees, and the sandy deserts of Arabia, to which Islam flies to renew its wild fury for another attack on Christians.

Christ will conquer, but when? That depends on you and me. Do we recognize the signs of the times? If every Catholic took up and maintained with manly fidelity the post assigned him by God, the whole world would soon be conquered. Everyone can co-operate provided only that he is of good will.

And what is this sign? It is the Cross, which a few days before had been a difficulty for the Jews, a folly for the heathen, an implement of martyrdom for the King of Heaven, but which on Easter Morn assumes the heavenly transfiguration of the Risen Savior, sheds over the whole world the glory of Christ, and fills it with the strength of truth. What a heavy darkness presses down on the grave of Our Savior, and yet the hopeful promise shines through: "*Sepulchrum eius erit gloriosum*" (His sepulchre will be glorious). We may walk in the glory of the Risen Savior, and the light which is diffused by this Victor over death and hell is the sign of the truth of our Faith.

Since the morning of the Resurrection the Cross has been the guiding-post for man. Such have the people of Europe found it. The splendor of the Risen Savior has enveloped those peoples who walked in His light, and the Church has remained in the watch-tower calling people to the Cross and its light. Preparations are now being made to help the light to win a victory over darkness.

Unless all signs deceive us, the next few decades will decide whether unbelief can beat off the assaults of truth and defend itself for several centuries longer behind its gloomy fortifications, or whether finally after 1900 years the Resurrection Morn will dawn for all peoples, bringing to them freedom of the soul. All Catholics should realize the situation and lend their co-operation. Gratitude for our salvation and for our faith demands expression in great deeds of love. The voices of the heralds who summon us to the fight are re-echoed by ten thousand tongues.

The Prophet Ezechiel (ix, 4) once saw in a vision a Cherub, who, afire for the honor of God, called a man with an inkhorn and said to him: "Go through the city of Jerusalem, and make a thau¹ upon the foreheads of the men that they may be saved."

While the missionaries pass through the spiritual deserts of pagandom, and make a cross on the foreheads of the candidates for baptism, the missionary movement with inkstand and ink passes through the cities at home and through the whole Church. It is love, the flaming love of God, which has called this missionary enthusiasm into life, and it desires to mark the cross on all foreheads and to impress it on all hearts. This stamp proclaims the bearer to be a knight of the Cross.

¹ The letter T, i.e., a cross.

The numerous mission periodicals have undertaken this work of love. These publications are of a most varied character, from the splendidly edited "Catholic Missions," which contains impressive reports and valuable treatises on the mission world, to the little missionary calendars and the attractive "Negro Child," which describes the misery of the pagans in the touching words and touching pictures that appeal to children's hearts.

Until 1912 the *Das Heidenkind* ("The Heathen Child") was the only Catholic mission publication for children in Germany, while no fewer than eighteen publications of this character were issued for Protestant children, some having a circulation of 200,000.

Every mission society now has at least one organ through which it appeals to the public, awakening enthusiasm and seeking help for the missions. Yet the Catholics with their twenty-six periodicals are still far behind the Protestants, who have now fifty-five.

Perhaps some people may think that the number of Catholic mission publications is too large? Instead of answering directly, let us ask another question: Have all Catholics been already incorporated in the mission movement? Are all good Catholics convinced of the necessity of the missions and of their own obligations to co-operate in this work to the best of their ability? If not, still more mission publications must be founded,

and those existing more widely distributed, so that they may bring home to all Catholics their obligations to the Church, to mankind, and to their Savior. (In the United States there are only about fifteen Catholic missionary magazines against one hundred published by the Protestants in behalf of their foreign missions.)

"*Ignoti nulla cupido*" — no one can be enthusiastic about the unknown. Thus, all those who are not impatient for the realization of the dearest wish of Our Savior have never realized what the missions are, their importance, their difficulties, and their needs. I am compelled to accept this explanation, as otherwise I should have to doubt their good-will.

The highest and holiest ideals — not a personal cause — are championed by the missionaries in their periodicals. They have thus a full right to call out incessantly to all children of the Catholic Church: "*Tua res agitur* — It is your cause for which we strive." Theirs is an appeal to all mankind which should be one in faith, just as there is only one God and Father of all, one object and end binding mankind together.

The spoken word supports the pen and the printing-press. Theological knowledge seeks to fill up a gap which it had previously left in its systematic edifice, and special chairs for missionary work have been established in the schools.

Many a long winter evening is devoted to a mission lecture. The description of distant peo-

ple by word and picture exercises a great attraction, while the higher object of the lecture is quietly effected, the hearts of all present being profoundly moved. A knowledge of the missions creates an enthusiasm for them.

The pulpits, to perhaps a greater extent than ever before, ring with eloquent appeals for the missions of the world, and these appeals meet with a joyful echo in the wide-open hearts of the faithful. Catholic conventions have espoused the cause of the missions with a warm enthusiasm that springs from a clear conception of a duty which must be conscientiously performed.

The Easter bells peal out loudly and joyfully through the land. The Easter Alleluia calls forth the exultant cry of "Praise the Lord" from tender children, gentle women, and valiant men, and acts of self-sacrificing charity are offered to the Savior as an Easter-morning greeting.

And what is His answer?

"Peace be with you!" By this He means God's peace in our hearts, peace among all peoples of the world, and eternal peace in heaven. Would that all were one in this peace, one on earth in faith, one in the Beatific Vision of the Risen Savior in heaven!

Pentecost Fire

THE apostles wait in holy expectation and earnest prayer. When will the Master fulfil the promise that He made to them at His Ascension? He was to send them the Spirit as their consolation. "Send us Thy Spirit," they now supplicate, for they know how urgently they need the strength of God. They were so timid and dismayed a few weeks before when they were gathered around their Master at the Last Supper. Then followed the terrible night when the boldest of them weakened and fell. A still more terrible day succeeded, which seemed to witness the dissolution of all their hopes. Their faith was bent, if not broken, but their Risen Master had fully restored it. He had, however, again departed from them, laying His Cross on their shoulders and resigning to them His whole work: "Go ye into the whole world and teach all peoples." That was His last testament. How weak they now feel themselves! Prayer is their only consolation, and they thus implore Him unceasingly: "Send forth Thy Spirit, and they will be regenerated, and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth."

The Savior keeps His word. With a rushing sound of a mighty wind, the power of God en-

velops the cenaculum, disturbing nothing and yet so mighty, so strange, and so mysterious that all the people of the city flock thither and stand in mute astonishment around the house. While the power of the Holy Ghost manifested itself in quiet majesty, and descended on the disciples in the form of tongues of fire, the representatives of the whole world as it was then known — Asia, Europe, and Africa — waited impatiently without. The noise of the rushing wind had summoned hither envoys of all nations — Parthians, Medes, Arabs, inhabitants of the country adjacent to the Euphrates, people from Crete, Egypt, and Lybia, and men from Rome, the Capital of the world. Through their ears the whole world listened to the Galilean fisherman, and either believed his word, or, through their unbelief, rejected the salvation offered them.

Filled with the Holy Ghost, Peter speaks words of truth and freedom, of salvation and peace. Through his lips, the Holy Ghost speaks a wonderful language — a language of love which all the strangers present hear in their native tongue. Pentecost fire is transferred to three thousand hearts, and enkindles in them the holy fire of faith.

Such was the natal day of the bride of the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic and Missionary Church. Since then the Pentecost fire has never been extinguished. The flame of fidelity and the glow of a saving charity impel the apostles to go

out to the unbounded lands which, according to God's all-wise decree, were then bound together into a mighty empire under the powerful dominion of Rome. Thanks to this political condition, the apostles were able to gain more easy access, not only to the lands around the Mediterranean Sea, but also to the dark forests of Germany, the lands bordering on the Tigris and Euphrates, and even the wonderful cities of the ancient Pharaohs.

Who can mistake the intentions and dispositions of God?

The infant Church was confronted with a gigantic twofold task: internal consolidation and external growth. In the midst of their evangelical journeys to bring new souls into the Church, the apostles devoted themselves with holy zeal to the care of the Christian communities. To ensure the internal development of the Church and the dogmatic definition of its truths, and to preserve with a true mother's care the purity of its doctrine and the inviolable holiness of the moral law, as Christ had entrusted it to them, that was the first great care of the apostles. But a second commission of their Divine Master had also to be discharged — a commission which was bound up with the first and carried the Church to the farthest confines of the then known world. This second commission was given in Our Savior's explicit command: "Go ye into the whole world."

Since the days of the apostles, the Church has encountered epochs of widespread and unhamper-

ed development, when all the fruits of grace ripened under favoring skies. The Church has also passed through stormy epochs, but after the fury of the storm has subsided, she always emerges fresh, vigorous, and rejuvenated. Unless we are mistaken, a glorious period of internal development for the Church is dawning through the dark storm-clouds of today.

The external development of the Church has always waited for great moments when she might bring peoples and lands under her gentle sway.

The transforming leaven of Christianity began its work in the mighty empire of Rome. Prosperous Christian communities sprang up everywhere—in Corinth, Rome, and Antioch. St. Thomas carried the Gospel to the Medes, Persians, and Indians; St. Andrew preached it in Thrace and Epirus (modern Turkey); SS. Peter and Paul grappled with paganism in the heart of the great empire at Rome, while St. James labored in Spain.

The idols of Italy were slow to bow down before the crucified God, but they bowed down at last. The blood of martyrs, shed before these idols, had softened the soil around them, thus undermining these statues and bringing them finally to the ground. In Northern Africa, Christianity enjoyed a spring of fresh splendor, but alas! this blossoming tree was soon to be uprooted and torn apart by the storm, and left there to be trampled on by the foot of the Turk.

Despising death and advancing over the dead bodies of its fallen champions, Christianity continued ever to advance, and penetrated to England and Germany. During one thousand years a glorious, sustained missionary activity was developed, and the first two epochs of the missionary Church came to an end with the Christianization of the lands about the Mediterranean and all the rest of Europe. From the vine-covered hills of Spain and Italy the Cross looked down on the land. Rising from the rocky breakers in the fiords of Scandinavia, it held out to the bold vikings the promise of a happy voyage through life. In the blue floods of the Bosphorus was reflected the golden splendor of the Cross which crowned the Hagia Sophia.

A new missionary period, imposing heavy tasks on the Western Church was approaching. Preparations for this period were made by the Holy Ghost, who ordains all things in a glorious way. The West had already given a proof of its strength of faith in the Crusades. It is true that the proud merchant families and the powerful maritime cities lusted after the treasures of India, and with insatiable avarice watched their heavily laden ships return, bringing them increased glory and power. But these same ships had borne the heralds of Our Savior to the distant lands, and they had brought richer treasures of heavenly goods to those who had given up their earthly goods under pressure to the foreign white

merchants. While the skilful seamen of Portugal and all-powerful Spain established colonies on the coasts of Africa and India by peaceful negotiations or by force, the envoys of God erected the Cross amid the uproar of arms and of haggling merchants, and attracted the natives towards them by their kindness and goodness. One event opened up new and apparently unlimited vistas for this epoch — the discovery of a new and immeasurable continent, America. Sincere Christian rulers occupied the thrones at this time, and their object in sending their fleets across the yawning oceans was not merely to establish their claim in new countries or to bring back gold. Another object was always prominent in their thoughts, for they wished to bring those peoples in the extreme West to the true Faith. 9

The recently formed Society of Jesus placed itself at the service of these noble-minded princes. The missionary fire burned high when Francis Xavier with a few companions set out for India, and later landed in Japan. Within half a century the Jesuits had already gathered one million Christians about them in Japan, while over in China they had been received at the court of Peking, and, clad in the mantle of a mandarin, protected Christianity against the jealousy which was threatening to extirpate it. This glorious missionary epoch was destined to have a mournful ending. A storm of persecution destroyed the Church in China, and within a few decades

Christianity was destroyed in the Island Empire of Japan, whose soil was reddened with the blood of Christian martyrs. Cape Pappenberg towers up as a gigantic monument from the Bay of Nagasaki as an eternal symbol of that glorious missionary period. From its steep summit the last thousands of Christians were thrown down to be dashed to pieces on the cliffs below.

Our own era should also develop into a glorious missionary epoch. Our age bears its special distinguishing stamp in the extraordinary efficiency of its machinery, the pride of its scientists, and its restless spirit of exploration which covers the whole globe. Industry and commerce, the dauntless courage of the explorers, and the colonial settlements of the European powers have prepared the way for the missionary movement. Distances have disappeared, and the peoples have been brought closer together, while international commerce has overthrown the barriers behind which nations formerly were secluded.

Msgr. Brugière, the first bishop appointed for Corea, spent four years in traveling and waiting before he could find a Chinese djonk to bring him from Siam to his "enclosed" vicariate apostolic. Hiding himself at times and requiring the services of a guide, after four years of indescribable sufferings and labors, he succeeded only in reaching the borders of his vicariate before death overtook him. Today, thanks to the steamship, we can make the journey in as many weeks as it took him

years. Quicker means of communication between distant countries has been a boon to the missions.

The countries occupied by the black races have now been thoroughly explored. The missionary follows the route maps of the explorers, and encounters tribes which, formerly not even known by name, have been so intimately sketched by travelers that their customs and traditions are already familiar.

For more than one thousand million non-Christians a decisive crisis is at hand. One division of these pagan peoples, the uncivilized tribes, are subject to the Colonial Powers, from whom they are destined to receive their civilization. On the other hand, we have the immeasurably populous states with a pagan civilization, which are situated chiefly in the Far East. These are being drawn closer to the proud culture of Europe, and wish to partake of our civilization, our technical achievements, and our learned sciences.

The Catholic Church must make herself a factor in this situation, and she has indeed grasped the sign of the times. Pentecost fire burns in the zealous souls of sixteen thousand missionary priests and six thousand lay Brothers. Pentecost fire burns in the sympathetic hearts of eighteen thousand Mission Sisters, and shines out into the gloomy night of pagandom and into benighted pagan souls. Pentecost fire also inflames the hearts of numberless Catholics, whose thoughts

rise above their everyday life and are inspired by the highest ideal: "For God and immortal souls!" These holy souls reflect the warm love of Our Savior across deserted regions and the storm-tossed waves of mighty oceans. This love brings consolation into wretched huts, where misery and sin are housed, and into still more wretched human souls, which the Prince of Darkness regards as his secure abode. Pentecost fire is thus carried to these benighted souls, who are gradually becoming inflamed with a passion for the honor of God.

Shall this Pentecost fire develop into a world conflagration? "I am come to send fire on the earth, and what will I but that it be enkindled?" This Pentecost fire cannot be extinguished.

But someone may say: "But what are these missionaries compared with a thousand million pagans and unbelievers? Furthermore, when we remember that most of these missionaries have already Christian communities which give full scope to their pastoral zeal and activity, what can they do towards making further conquests?"

Lord, send laborers into Thy vineyard! Holy Ghost, send forth the fire of Thy divine love!

Times have greatly changed since the first feast of Pentecost. The object which the Church holds before herself has remained the same, and the goal of the missionary is unchanged: "That they may all be one!" The situation, however, is very different. Once upon a time Our Savior sent

forth His disciples to preach the Gospel. He sent them out *sine pera et calceamentis* (without scrip or shoes), and He could ask these: "Have you wanted for anything?" His faithful disciples could only answer: "No, Lord, we have wanted for nothing." Today, however, the necessities of missionaries have grown, and Christian charity, which has already so greatly concerned itself with the social needs of its neighbors, knocks untiringly on the doors of our hearts in the name of the missions.

Whence came this change? St. Paul was not unaware of Our Savior's interrogation of His disciples, and yet he besought alms from the faithful in Galatia and Corinth for the Christians in Jerusalem. It is not for himself that the missionary solicits our contributions. And, when his calls become more numerous and his demands increase, it is because his sphere of activity is ever broadening. We have already spoken of the great importance of the schools in Africa for Christianity. Does not the African missionary then act rightly when he devotes the greater portion of the alms received for the missions to the support of the numerous schools, in which the promising seeds of a native Christianity are being cultivated? When, for example, in a few years the school-children of our Vicariate of Dar-es-Salaam are sent forth from the schools as Christians, and lay the foundation for a new generation of Christian families, a widespread transformation of the

whole native attitude towards life must necessarily set in. Christianity will begin to bear its fruit.

"He who soweth sparingly, shall also reap sparingly." If the missionary can maintain only a few poor schools, how can he expect a rich harvest? Catholics who helped the missions to attain their present success, cannot fail them now, for it would be a calamity if, through lack of support, the expected harvest were lost.

If the Catholic Church is to establish herself in India and attain influence, she must surround herself with the brilliant scholarship which, as shown by the famous Jesuit University of Bombay (to quote a single instance), evokes the admiration of all India. That so glorious an institution entails heavy expense, goes without saying. The institution, however, is maintained for the sake of immortal souls, for there are different ways of bringing races nearer to the Church.

To relieve the poor, to care for the sick and aged, and thus perhaps on the threshold of death win them for Christ through self-sacrificing love, is another duty of the Church. It is another path to the same goal—a secret foot-path unattended by glory or applause. Yet many conquests are thus made, for corporal need makes the heart receptive. To feed the hungry, to care for the sick, to clothe and relieve the poor requires, however, that an active charity at home supply the Sisters with the means of fulfilling these duties.

Only with this co-operation can the Sisters help the unfortunate ones, and thus win their way to the hearts of the desolate and forlorn.

The spirit of the Far East is expressed in the pomp of the Buddhist monasteries. The inhabitants of the cities of China, Japan, or Corea would sneer at the poor mud churches in which the negro Christians assemble in the distant mission villages in the Congo. In the Far East, therefore, the missions must compel notice and respect by their imposing churches, beautiful ceremonies, and magnificent vestments. This idea has been well summed up in the desire which Father Dahlmann, S.J., one of the chief authorities on Eastern Asiatic conditions, repeatedly expressed: "Here in the Far East there should be a Benedictine Monastery in every large city."

In Zikawai near Shanghai, where Chinese culture most openly challenges European, the Jesuit Fathers have performed a peculiarly solid work which has exercised an extraordinary impression on the natives and has ensured for the Catholic Church the consideration which she merits as the Church of Christ. From the Observatory there the fame of the Fathers of the Society of Jesus has extended throughout the entire Middle Empire. Their industrial school and art studios are daily attracting admiring visitors, while from their glorious church the blessing of Our Savior extends over the country and is bursting the bonds of superstition that have held the

East enchained. No visitor to Zikawai can feel that the outlay which has been and must hereafter be made has been in vain, even though the fruits of the extraordinary labors of the Jesuit Fathers are ripening somewhat slower than our impatient age would desire.

These are a few sketches from modern missionary life, and correspond with the aims of the Holy Ghost. In the early days of the Church, the Holy Spirit conferred on one the word of wisdom, on another the grace of healing, on another the working of miracles, on another the discerning of spirits, and on another diverse kinds of tongues, according as He willed (I Cor., xii, 8 sqq.). This work of the Holy Ghost is being continued on an ever greater and more splendid scale.

In the first Pentecost Sermon the miracle of tongues created an overwhelming impression, and opened the way for the passage of the grace of the Holy Ghost into numbers of hearts. Who could name all the languages in which the joyful message of Jesus Christ is now proclaimed to the peoples of the world—from the Eskimos in the most northern latitude to the South Sea Islanders, among the remote forests of America whither the scattered Indian tribes have fled, in the different provinces of the old Chinese Empire, and among the African tribes with their numberless tongues? In all these languages now speaks the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Love.

A Pentecost morning in which the Holy Spirit is wafted through the world is the dawn of a great and holy day for mankind, and a glorious and joyful day for the Church which can call out to all pagandom: "The promise of this day is held out also to you and your children and all, in however distant a clime, whom Our Lord God vouchsafes to call." And it is His will to call all without exception.

"A great moment only too often finds mankind a weakly race, which cannot grasp the greatness of the tasks of an era, which cannot discern the purposes of the Holy Ghost that are revealed in the trials and strivings, the questions and needs of our age" (Kehrer).

Let us resolve that the great Pentecost Day of the Church will not find us too weak. Why do we hesitate, and how long will our indecision persist? Does it not seem as if we had already hesitated unreasonably long? When the Holy Ghost is calling upon the people as clearly as on the first Pentecost Day, a postponement is equivalent to a refusal to co-operate; it is almost tantamount to the insolent: "I don't want to," which the son in the Gospel answered his father when the latter wished to send him into the vineyard.

If St. Paul had refused to embark in the frail skiff which sailed so slowly along the coasts, what miracles would God's omnipotence have been forced to work! God lends His aid, but He usually prefers to use the instruments which He has

selected for His service. St. Boniface and his monks could have found all kinds of excuses for remaining in their quiet cloisters, and not attempting the evangelization of Germany, and thus have allowed the favorable opportunity to pass by. May we neglect our opportunities merely because they seem to us crowned with thorns and red with the blood of martyrdom? If the fire of Christian charity, which constantly burns for the conversion and salvation of pagans, had been allowed to be extinguished, we ourselves should now lead a dreary existence. Truth, man's highest good, would have been buried in the bleak twilight of superstition. The insatiable longing of man's heart to love God would remain unrelieved. The consciousness that we had been created for everlasting happiness and were unable to find this happiness would have left us peaceless and joyless.

How long do we intend to wait? Do we not see Our Savior at the market-place of the world, hiring laborers for His vineyard? Christian Europe and America should furnish these laborers, for they have been privileged to attain first their full growth in the living light which comes from the Cross. In turn, the Romanic peoples—Italy in Christian antiquity, Portugal and Spain at the close of the Middle Ages, and France in modern times—have championed the Church in the missionary fields of the world. Our Lord now summons the spiritual knighthood of other

lands, and all in their own homeland should assist the Cross to victory.

Once more the Lord comes to the market-place. It is the eleventh hour. "Why stand you here all the day idle?" He asks us. He intends His words, not as a reproach, but as a loving, urgent request that, with all our stored-up energy, we throw ourselves into the gap which unbelief and hatred of God have torn in the ranks of His laborers.

At the eleventh hour? The day has already far advanced. Are we willing that the fire of Pentecost should be extinguished? Is the night of unbelief descending over Christian countries—the night when none may work? Must Our Savior turn His thoughts towards the pagan world to repair the loss amongst us? One might almost think so from the greatly increased number of those who, in recent national censuses, openly declare themselves without religion.

The faith still glows in Catholic hearts, but it should be aflame, and faith at home should blaze out anew into a fiery enthusiasm to support the warfare in pagan countries for the honor of God. We shall prize our holy Faith all the higher, guard it more carefully, and defend it with all the more determination, in proportion as we are moved by the misery of the pagan world, recognize the instability of unbelief, and gain a deeper insight into the forlorn condition of pagandom. Suffused with heavenly light, the jewel of our

holy Faith shines upon us from the pagan lands to which our charity has borne it. The heavy shadows of pagandom form a background which reveals this jewel in all its splendor and clear beauty. Can we not hear the childlike voices of the newly converted pagans, imploring us not to extinguish the flickering taper of faith which we have just lighted? Let us protect this taper from the storms which threaten it, and pray with folded hands:

Veni, Sancte Spiritus,	Come, Holy Ghost, send down those beams
Et emitte coelitus	Which swiftly flow in silent streams
Lucis tuae radium.	From Thy bright throne above.
Veni pater pauperum,	O come, Thou Father of the poor,
Veni dator munerum,	O come, Thou Source of all our store,
Veni lumen cordium.	Come, fill our hearts with love.
O lux beatissima,	Thrice blessed Light, shoot home Thy darts,
Reple cordis intima	And pierce the centers of those hearts
Tuorum fidelium.	Whose faith aspires to Thee.
Da virtutis meritum,	Grant us in life Thy helping grace,
Da salutis exitum,	Grant us in death to see Thy face,
Da perenne gaudium.	And endless joys inherit.

Regina Apostolorum



RE well-trodden roads as difficult to travel as are narrow paths which wind through thickets and over sharp, flinty pebbles? Some seem inclined to think that the path of the missionary must be pleasant, since it was trodden by Our Savior in His wearying journeys, and finally with the heavy Cross on His mangled shoulders. The path is indeed not necessarily a painful one. When we think of the Holy Women, who clung to Our Savior to the last, who gathered around the Cross in their desire to help Him and to participate in His divine missionary work, we must blush over our own lack of virility, for it is this alone which deters us from the self-denying path of the missions. It is pusillanimity which paints the co-operation with Christ's work of salvation as difficult. The Holy Women shared in the love and sorrows of Our Savior. They understood why He prayed so earnestly: "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He send laborers into His harvest, for the harvest indeed is great, but the laborers are few." They entered into His service, and by their prayers and example enlisted others for the work of salvation.

Taking the Holy Women as their prototypes, the women and maidens of Germany gathered around the Queen of the Apostles to join with her in promoting the life-work of her Divine Son. Their missionary program was also based on a contemplation of the Holy Women, whose example inspired them with the courage and self-sacrifice necessary for the execution of their work.

Under the Cross of Our Savior kneels a woman, suffused with tears. She refuses to depart from her dying Savior, to whom, as she knows, she owes everything. She has struggled to the Cross with Mother Mary. Neither the rough demeanor of the cruel executioners nor the mockery of the multitude can drive her away. Her place is under the Cross for she is determined to receive into her loving heart the mystery of the Redemption in all its incomprehensible depths. After the burial of Our Lord, therefore, her heart can find no rest, but with irresistible power draws Mary Magdalen to the grave of her Master. Our Risen Savior appears to her, and commissions her to bring to the apostles the joyful message of his Resurrection, and of the completion of man's redemption. Through her apostolic courage and apostolic love, she has become the *apostola apostolorum*—Christ's apostle to the apostles.

Magdalen may serve as the exemplar for the heroic virgins who so ardently love Our Savior, the Cross and the souls for whom He died, that

they embrace the missionary cross and carry it to the pagan missions. Is it possible that they are ignorant of the trials and sufferings which are mingled with the joys of missionary life? Is the joyful sentiment which induces them to leave their quiet convent at home for inhospitable settlements in distant lands merely the result of the overflowing spirits of youth and excessive sentimentality? Such is far from being the case. It is the glow of a pure charity which tinges their cheeks; it is the joy of being able to do something for Jesus, and, even if they can do nothing else, of offering the fresh life of their youth as a sacrifice to their Beloved Savior and of seeking through this sacrifice to redeem souls for Him. This hope of saving souls and conducting them to Our Savior is the impulse which drives loving souls to distant lands. "The charity of Christ presseth us," says St. Paul, and this is the unanimous answer of all the religious when they leave the beloved quiet of their convents at home.

These God-seeking souls know full well the privations and labors, the worries and troubles, as well as the interior consolations and spiritual joys which await them in a poor mission station, surrounded by still poorer natives. But, since there is so much to be done in pagan countries that cannot be done by the missionaries themselves—so much that demands the soft heart and the delicate hands of a woman—these Sisters volunteer their co-operation. They are also de-

sirous of proving their love for their Savior—a love stronger than death.

The schools for girls present a fertile field for the activity of the Mission Sisters. The importance of educating the girls is self-evident. Happy Christian marriages and peaceful Christian families are the firm foundations of Christianity, and, to lay these foundations, the education of girls must be carried out with the greatest care, and with a profound understanding of the female character.

Conditions are perhaps not quite so dreary in the "civilized lands" of Asia as in Africa, where family conditions are unspeakably sad. The negro maiden appears to inherit nothing from her mother except a dull acquiescence in the unworthy position of her sex. For hundreds and thousands of years the negro woman has been nothing more than the slave of the man. The growing maidens are simply sold by their fathers to the spouse selected for them, and then spend the remainder of their lives performing the heavy work in the fields and in the hut.

The Mission Sister appears as a saving angel in the family circle. Instead of the lowest conception of life, the moral elevation of Christianity is brought home to the young negro girls, together with its happiness and blessings. As a rule, it is difficult at first to induce the girls to come to the school. However, as soon as they see that the Sisters are kind and mean to do good

to them, they come with an ever growing pleasure, and, at the same time as being educated and trained in handicrafts, receive a knowledge of Christ in their tender hearts. The education of these girls is thus a truly apostolic work, since it prepares the hearts of these young girls for Our Savior's coming.

The apostolic love of the sympathetic Sisters finds other approaches to the most unfriendly and stubbornly closed hearts. One of these ways is through the sick-room—or rather, the miserable sick-hut. What a patient, self-sacrificing nursing Sister can do under these circumstances, for both soul and body, can perhaps be properly estimated only by those who have some idea of the manifold diseases of the tropics, and have seen the festering wounds of all kinds and the helpless sick people without a single intelligent idea as to how to appease their ailments. Many a merciful heart has won the crown of martyrdom by contracting a fatal disease from the sick. Truly apostolic is this work also.

I may perhaps be permitted to transcribe here a short passage from my diary. The same drama is of course being repeated daily, with a rapid change of scenery and characters, whenever one visits a mission institution administered by the Sisters.

Perhaps there are no darker shadows in the world than those thrown by the burning sun in the gorgeously colored country of Ceylon. At

least, it seems so at the first glance, as we glance at the decrepit old men who totter around and the sick who groan incessantly in their beds. And yet a great light shines into these sick-rooms which form a long line along the airy passages. A love which rejoices in sacrifice has gathered these poorest and most pitiable of creatures from the streets, brought them into this quiet refuge, and created for them a home such as Christian charity alone can make.

After passing through the sick-room, I made the following notes in my diary:

"The fragrant air and the bright blossoms of Ceylon, the varied occupations of a strange people, and the fresh impressions of a new world, are closely linked in my mind today with the name of Colombo. All these colorful pictures will, however, grow dim; other peoples will displace the Cingalese in my memory; the green woods of my home supplant the waving palm-groves of Ceylon, and the wintry, snow-covered fields the shimmering glow of Colombo. One word, however, will be always inextricably associated in my mind with the capital of Ceylon—the word "charity." During my visit to the asylum of the Petites Soeurs des pauvres, this word was audible at every step, and clearly legible at every glance around me.

"There, supporting herself with her staff, stood an aged, bent Cingalese woman. Old age and hardship had dug deep furrows in her ema-

ciated features. The watchful care of the Sisters and their self-denying charity were unable to smooth out the wrinkles in her face, but they have superimposed on her features a look of blessed content. For this poor creature, her last days are the most beautiful of her whole life—doubly beautiful because this beauty is immortal. The Superioress assured me that not one of these poor creatures fails to receive Baptism before her departure for a better world . . .

“We now pass to the other wing of the asylum in which the men are housed. The chapel separates this wing from that occupied by the women.

“A sick Cingalese man lies in a bright, airy ward. The angel of death hovers over him. One thinks every moment that the dying man must have extended his hand for the palm of victory, which the angel will extend to him on his solemn entrance into the promised land. How difficult is the work of the good Sisters while one feathered leaf is being added to another until the palm of victory is at last complete! The time since this aged and sickly pagan was brought to the asylum has been so short, and he who knew nothing before of God desired to know nothing about eternity. But love would not permit the Sisters to slacken in their efforts, and eventually their meek charity proved victorious.

“In the evening Benediction is given. Immediately after Benediction a murmur of subdued voices is heard through the halls, still fragrant

with incense and sanctified by Our Savior's presence. For a little while a quavering prayer was heard—a parting greeting of the good old man to His loving Redeemer before He returned to the prison of the tabernacle. Not a single syllable could I understand; his words were to me an unintelligible jumble. At first I was amazed; then for a moment I was inclined to consider him irreverential, but eventually I found it difficult to refrain from tears. His manner was uncouth, and a sensitive ear would be offended by his method of expressing his gratitude, faith, and love. His language, however, was understood by the God of love. And, as I listened, it seemed as if the words resounded in my ears: 'Wherever the holy love of God and man rules, there dwells God.' "

Exactly a year later, on January 26, 1912, I had another opportunity of visiting an institute of charity, where holy love celebrates its glorious triumphs. This institution was situated deep in the interior of Africa. Carefully we mount up the steep heights to the lepers' settlement near the mission station of Kwiro, East Africa. Passing through an attractive and sun-bathed landscape of oddly shaped dolomite rocks and waving dragon-blood palms, which distinguish the Mahenga Plateau, our road sinks into a glorious valley. We seem to be entering a retired corner of paradise, so pleasant is the garden that nature has here planted.

And yet the curse of sin has found an ingress into this paradise. This little valley is inhabited by about seven hundred lepers, who are here segregated from the healthy people. It is an awful sight to watch these unfortunate creatures, consumed by their disease, squatting before their huts. The trail of suffering leads through this paradisaal land from house to house, but Christian mercy also dwells in this valley of tears.

Day after day two Sisters come from the mission station, bind the loathsome wounds of the lepers, and, while assuaging their bodily pains and bringing them material consolation, they also pour balsam into the wounded souls which dwell in these frightfully distorted bodies. How long will they be able to render this Samaritan service? In the evening they climb laboriously up the hill on which their little convent is situated. The awful appearance of the wounds and the sickening odor of the putrefied flesh of the lepers have taken away all desire for food. It is with difficulty that they force themselves to eat a few mouthfuls. And yet on the next morning they hurry again to their sick charges, borne on the wings of love. But how much longer can they continue this work without succumbing to the malignant contagion? How can they fail to fall victims to their exhausting charitable labors? But there are souls to be saved.

This sacrificial love has already brought many saints to heaven. While the body is visibly lan-

guishing, the soul becomes clearer and freer until it finally unlooses the bond which unites it to the decayed body and departs to enjoy the glories of heaven. Love meanwhile has extended its conquests among the living; while it cannot prevent the collapse of the rotting bodies, it gathers more hearts for God.

The wretched, straw-thatched hut, which served for a chapel during my visit, was not only most unworthy of its object, but had long since grown too small. We were thus compelled to undertake the task of building a suitable church for the ever-increasing body of the faithful. The poor lepers received the news with joy. But what aid could they give in the building of the church, since they had not the wherewithal to procure for themselves the most necessary clothing or the essential food? They wished nevertheless to help to the best of their ability. The men, who were still able to do some work, felled trees in the woods or burned lime, and it was touching to observe how even weak children lent their assistance, dragging stones from the quarries. Love has enkindled its fire in their hearts. God meanwhile keeps watch over all their actions. Every word of consolation which the Sisters address to these forlorn beings will be rewarded; every step which they take to lead these most destitute of creatures from their deep misery to everlasting happiness will find fitting recompense. Their paths are the paths of the apostles; their charity is true apostolic love.

I see another woman approach Our Savior. Christ is on the road to His death—the most difficult of missionary roads! He struggles along under the Cross, which is to accomplish our salvation, while blood and sweat cover His face. Veronica beholds His countenance: “How can I console Him, our beloved Master? What help can I give? Shall I relieve Him of the Cross? Or shall I help Him to carry it?” She feels herself, however, too weak for this task.

Veronica saw the Mother of Christ stand by the wayside. Mary had not broken down when her Son was hurried past. A touching greeting was exchanged between the Mother and her Son, as the latter continued His way in the middle of His executioners and the howling mob. The loving glance of Mother and Son had pierced Veronica’s heart, and had given her also the courage to do something for Christ. But what was she to do? Love makes one inventive. Removing the veil from her head, she presents it to our Savior, who gratefully presses it to His face, and then returns it to Veronica.

This loving, grace-enriched soul, who received in her veil the impression of the blessed countenance of Jesus, has found many imitators. Throngs of matrons and maidens have followed her example. As God did not call them for the mission, the mission cross was too heavy for them to bear. Theirs, however, is the ingenious love of Veronica, which conceives new methods of

service, and often succeeds in turning to advantage something that apparently has no value.

On many occasions I have had the good fortune and pleasure of seeing the annual exhibitions held by the Mission Association of Catholic Women and the Sodality of St. Peter Claver. Large rooms have been filled with the vestments, chalices, and clothes which the members of these societies have collected or made with the little offerings of the members. An especially deep impression was made on me by the objects which childish simplicity had contributed for the poor pagan children: dolls and toys, from which it was a wrench for the childish heart to separate itself. Many visitors may have thought to themselves: "What is the use of these things? What will the negro children do with them?" Why should we not bring pleasure to the hearts of the negro children also? Besides, these offerings of the little ones have an inestimable value; in the first place, they are the expression of pure love, and, in the second place, only by encouraging such little offerings can love and its exercise be promoted in children's hearts.

But here are variegated garments, composed of very small pieces of cloth sewn together! A cold critic will exclaim: "Much more labor was expended on this garment than the whole thing is worth." This may be so, but must we not also appraise the love expressed in this garment? This is of inestimable value, and its value is trans-

mitted to the garment which is perhaps to clothe and delight a poor, naked child beside the Congo or the Zambezi or in India. Besides, has not the loving hand that made this garment saved the money that must otherwise have been expended for a new, ready-made garment. These pennies saved are left in the treasury, and are allowed to increase until there is enough to buy a chalice. The missionary takes this chalice in his hand as the representative of Our Divine Savior, who once received the veil from Veronica. And on the blessed altar-cloths, which pious hands have sewed, will rest the same Savior who then left on Veronica's veil the impression of His sacred countenance.

It is impossible to estimate how much joy is conferred on numberless poor mission churches when, after such exhibitions, the boxes filled with vestments and holy vessels are sent far and wide throughout the world. Many an altar which had previously consisted merely of a few boxes joined together, can now be replaced by a beautiful portable altar, small but worthy. Empty bottles, which have long served in many places as altar candlesticks, can now be cast aside. Necessity has been rightly described as the mother of inventions, but still more beautiful than her inventions are the discoveries of love.

When these gifts of charity arrive, what is it that evokes the loud outburst of joy from the hordes of children? What is it that causes the

tears of gratitude to flow down the furrows which worry and privations have dug in the faces of the missionaries? It is the thought of the love which, with every stitch, has worked the countenance of Our Savior into the linen. That such love will not go unrewarded, we are assured in the words of Our Redeemer: "As long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to Me."

Still another group of women is mentioned in the holy Gospel. This group also is gathered around Mary, Queen of the Apostles. Formerly these women had crowded around their Divine Master, and had followed Him, tendering Him their love and service. The Son of God has now returned to heaven, and these women remain united with the apostles. What duty do they now devote themselves to? The Acts of the Apostles tell us: "Mary, the mother of Jesus, was with the women and the apostles unanimous in prayer." They were praying for the young Church and its propagation; they were praying for the coming of the Holy Ghost. In this quiet prayer preparation was being made for the glorious missionary movement which was to fill all Jerusalem with astonishment on Pentecost Sunday, and the first fruit of their prayer was seen in the throngs who flocked to the new Church, beseeching it to throw open its doors and admit the multitude that sought salvation. That holy assemblage in the Supper Room at Jerusalem were imploring God

to send down the Holy Spirit on themselves, and especially on the head of St. Peter. It is the Holy Ghost who inflames the hearts of the apostles, and the loving warmth of their hearts is conveyed to the hearts of their hearers. It is also prayer which has prepared the way for grace into those hearts, and opened the door for the entrance of the Holy Ghost.

Today, as in the early days of the Church, the greater part of the external work falls on the missionaries themselves. This external work consists in their manifold labors for the glory of God, the honor of the Church, and the salvation of souls. While the apostles were carrying on their public ministry, Mary and the Holy Women were supporting them with the power of their prayers; they at the same time assisted in supplying what, during the development of external activity, was neglected in the creation of internal strength. Mary leads a host of women into the field to struggle against the powers of darkness and to fight for the victory of Christ. This is a battle without the din of arms—a fight in which the combatants do not know whence they derive their strong aid, nor do those smitten with the arrows of love suspect why they should suddenly give up their obstinate resistance and bend down before the victorious Cross and do homage to the King of Heaven.

A similar league of prayer to that which was formed in the Supper Room around Mary for the

conquest of immortal souls has always stood behind the missionaries, and has incessantly implored Heaven to grant them courage when they were oppressed with cares and labors and discouraged by failures and disappointed hopes. These faith-inspired prayers have given the power of conviction to their words, won success for their self-denying labors, and brought down a blessing on their tireless activity.

It is true, of course, that the missionaries themselves must also pray. They know only too well that everything depends on the blessing of God. Nevertheless, inasmuch as they know this and fear lest, under the pressure of external causes and owing to the heat and burden of their daily labors, they may not devote themselves so zealously to prayer as their difficult and sacred work demands, their greatest consolation lies in the unconquerable might of the prayers which soar up to heaven from God-loving hearts, calling down the heavenly dew on the harvest that is sown with labor and tears.

With such instances of the conquering power of prayer before us, is it necessary to make any other special appeal to Catholics to join with the Holy Women who pray with Mary? In prayer, indeed, opens out the most fertile field for love's activity. Perhaps you are anxious to relieve the needs of the poor pagans, and to make an offering which would enable the missionaries to come to the aid of these hapless creatures; but your hand

is empty, for God has given you scarcely any more of earthly goods than is necessary to maintain the strength of your body. And this body is so tired and sick, and your hand so weak and fatigued, that it cannot even use the needle in working during your leisure hours for Our Savior and His beloved souls. Even trembling fingers can still hold your rosary, and, even if these also are too weak, your lips or your heart can dispatch a short prayer to heaven. It may be that the Divine Mercy has waited for this prayer, which will perhaps release the stream of grace to pour down on the earth and conduct peoples to the holy Faith. Perhaps this prayer will obtain strength for a disheartened missionary, and spur him to renew his assault on obstinate souls, which may now surrender to his importunate love. This prayer may conduct a Guardian Angel to the death-bed of a poor pagan, who, at the moment of death, will recall the consoling doctrine of some missionary and with an act of contrition pass away from this life—into heaven.

Only in heaven shall we know the divine efficacy and the marvelous achievements of prayer. Many a one who has toiled and striven earnestly, and can furnish the admiring world with statistics demonstrating how numerous his successes have been, will one day have to yield precedence to simple, meek souls, whose works were concealed and unknown, but whose prayers have filled the wide courts of heaven, and evoked

the wonder and jubilation of the angels. The crusade of prayer will storm heaven, and conquer the earth.

The mountains of Judea once witnessed a tender, loving mystery. They beheld the Mother of God hurry through the valleys, and over the hills, spurred on by a love that allowed the Blessed Virgin no rest. She wishes to visit her cousin, Elizabeth, and to reveal to her the joyful tidings of the coming of the Redeemer. Elizabeth greets Our Lady as "blessed among women," and then Mary's canticle of gratitude for God's unexampled favor to her rises above the hills: "My soul doth magnify the Lord!" Will the narrow valleys of the mountains of Judea confine this mystery within their limits, or will they re-echo it a thousand times throughout the world, telling of the Savior whom Mary has born?

"All nations shall call me blessed"—all nations, all lands, and all ages. But alas! all mankind does not yet call Our Lady blessed in her Son; all mankind does not yet follow its kind Mother who would lead it to the Son of God; all mankind does not yet do homage to its Lord and its Queen. Broad lands and entire peoples are still silent. Millions indeed unite in the praise of Mary and her Divine Son, and are confident that her prophecy will be fulfilled. A whole world of holy souls shares Mary's longing for the sweetest, purest, and holiest kind of maternal happiness: that all may become her children, and that

all shall find their way home to their Father's house. "All nations shall call me blessed"—this must remain no empty wish of our heavenly Mother. Our love will hasten over mountains and seas to summon the nations of the earth. In the great choir of the Church they shall train themselves for the eternal Magnificat in heaven. Queen of Apostles, pray for us!

Graves by the Wayside

HAVE you ever wandered among the graves of your cemetery at home on some warm summer evening or some day in the fall, leisurely reading the inscriptions on the tombstones and recalling the dead who here rest so peacefully? Was not this walk so singularly restful that you resolved often to revisit this quiet spot? As we wander in silence among the dead, it sometimes occurs to us that they would like to address us; and, if they were friends or relatives of ours, they seem to utter a word of exhortation. If they were men whose works once awakened our interest, we would fain question them as to how they now view their labors and sacrifices, their plans and hopes, their successes and disappointments.

Many may think that one cannot escape a feeling of melancholy and loneliness when one walks alone among the unnumbered dead, and, as it were, converses with them, questioning them and answering their questions. It is, however, not depressing, but elevating, for we there learn to judge all our thoughts and actions by an easy and simple standard from the sober elevation of a funeral mound.

Before the graves of the heroic dead, especially, our courage will be confirmed. Even when we flit quickly by, the thought can scarcely help occurring to us: "Such pillars have fallen. Why, then, should I consider it so hard that the same lot awaits me? In the middle of their glorious but incompleted work, the hammer and chisel fell from their hands." Some may complain: "Is it not better, then, that we should abstain from even beginning great works? With gigantic endurance this man has labored, and where now is his success? Others are harvesting the laurels which he sowed and cultivated. It seems to me to be the easier course to let others plant and then claim the harvest." This reasoning, of course, is of the very ignoble kind.

If we pause a moment and think, we shall see the error of the last mentioned sentiments. Strong pillars are indeed overthrown, but it is an honorable course to stand firm and not weaken in our allegiance. In the midst of our labors, God may indeed call us away. But we shall have done our share, and God will find others with strength to continue our unfinished work. If we sit still awaiting the harvest, when will this come? Let us work while it is still day.

The graves of such heroes line the wayside wherever we penetrate into pagan lands. Who could calculate their number? As we follow the narrow path which leads to some little mission church, we pass a row of modest wooden crosses.

Inspired with veneration and gratitude, the faithful renew these crosses whenever decay sets in, and amongst their number we may detect many which have been recently erected over newly made mounds. The stamp of the Cross is always sharply impressed on mission life.

Like long memorial lists of the dead of the various mission Congregations, these lines of graves mark the paths which the missions have followed, surmounted always by the sign of the Cross. I may perhaps be allowed to quote here some statistics of our own Congregation. In the long line of our deceased missionaries, seventy-five per cent were carried away by death before their thirty-fifth year, while only three attained the age of forty-two years. All went forth in the full bloom of manhood and with every physical qualification for work in a tropical clime. Yet not a single individual is deterred from embracing this work by the knowledge that, when embarking on the missions, he must resign himself beforehand to the sacrifice of at least half his years. If we examine the reports from other missionary territories, we shall find the sacrifice the same in many instances, and perhaps even greater.

What sacrifices the Spanish missionaries had to make in Fernando Po! Between 1883 and 1900, during the early years of development, more than eighty missionaries succumbed. Fifty lie buried in the cemetery of Bagdad, and not one of

them was active more than ten years. Who, then, could compute all the graves which multiply so rapidly wherever the missionaries have entered upon their self-sacrificing work? These noble places of sacrifice exercise a more instant effect than any verbal invocation, and make a more touching appeal for aid for the overworked missionaries. "Catholics of the world!" they seem to say, "Catholics of every land! Fill up the gaps in our ranks so that the labor of our sweat and our tears may not be destroyed."

Gazing upon the decaying cross which guards the graves of a martyred missionary and of the true ones who under his leadership have also won the palm of victory, we cannot but feel an elation of faith impelling us to continue the work of the martyr, or at least to aid in its continuation.

What a wealth of youthful vigor and manly courage has been buried in these graves! And what varied lines of thought they evoke! To many it may even seem as if in these graves were also interred the hopes which had inspired the work of the missionaries. Some may think it was due to mankind that such noble spirits should not have been thus squandered, but have been preserved for the other great tasks to which the Church might have assigned them. Now that they are dead, it might seem as if their work also has been destroyed, or is at least at a standstill.

Such are the thoughts of those whose eyes do not rise above the funeral mound. The eyes of others will also mark the cross above the grave. What a premature end awaited Our Savior in the full vigor of His manhood, when He bled to death on the Cross! Are our lives more precious than His? The cause for which we labor is the same. If Our Savior was so ready to shed His life-blood for this cause, is the extent of man's contribution to be a subject for nice calculation?

Men are called upon to sacrifice themselves in the cause of national liberty, when a breach is to be made in the ranks of the enemy, and victory is to be bought at the expense of countless lives. Men are called upon to display their endurance at monumental public works, which exact a toll of thousands of workmen. Along the banks of the Panama Canal runs a line of graves, telling of the cost of this undertaking in human lives. While the French were engaged in this work, no fewer than forty thousand clerks and workingmen fell victims to the fever or other epidemics in twenty-five years. Only by sacrifice is anything truly great accomplished. The very difficulties of an undertaking are indeed a challenge to active minds.

Death tears great gaps also in the close ranks of those who are attacking the kingdom of darkness. One might imagine that the constant arrival of death notices would dampen the missionary enthusiasm of the joyful youths who are being

prepared in the mission houses for their spiritual vocation. On the contrary, if anything could cool their fiery enthusiasm, it would be the quiet and comfort which seems so soft an apprenticeship for the road they aspire to walk. The greatest sacrifices indeed always inspire a ready courage which throws itself into the breach and closes the gap.

Every mission house is characterized by that joyous spirit which seized the alumni of the seminary in Paris when the news of the martyrdom of their colleagues in Corea reached Europe in 1866. Across the broad ocean, in a distant corner of the earth, the grave had ended the labors of two bishops and of all the rest of the Corean missionary band. After long, tedious waiting, the Christians succeeded in rescuing the mangled bodies of the martyrs and their severed heads. Orphaned and grieving they now stood about their graves.

When these tidings reached the missionary seminary in Paris, the students decorated the statue of Our Lady as if for one of the principal feast-days. With tendrils of vines they wove a crown, and hundreds of little flickering lights illuminated the statue. In a *Te Deum* they gave expression to the deep joy of their hearts and their deep longing, that they might be allowed to share in the happiness of martyrdom with their lucky brethren in Corea.

"Behold, here I am! Send me forth!" This is always the answer of dozens of young missionaries when even a single champion of Christ has fallen, and the news of his death is announced to the community of a monastery.

We must not, however, allow the inspiring enthusiasm of the young missionaries to blind us to the other side of the picture: the anxiety and grief which possess the orphaned flock as it weeps beside the grave of its dear shepherd, the troubled look of the bishop as he looks beyond the grave of the dead missionary, and wonders where he can find a successor to continue the suspended work: "Who will guard my sheep?" But the cross over the martyr's grave is a guarantee and a source of consolation and blessing.

Every grave shelters mysteries, and offers significant advice to the passer-by. It is for this reason that on the crosses above the graves we not infrequently find the words: "Sta, viator!" (Pause, traveler!)

Catholic America too has an interest in these martyrs' graves. Some parents have already sent to the missions their sons and daughters, who are so soon to sink down for their everlasting rest under the shelter of sighing palms. Other parents are today being besieged by the entreaties of a beloved child: "Father, mother, let me go! I feel the impulse within me, and God wants me for the missions. I must and will dedicate my life to His service."

Generous benefactors have supported the work of the missionary, who now rests in his grave. A letter, signed by a strange hand, brings them information of his last activities and his very premature death. The stranger asks them not to desert the cause, which had hitherto enjoyed their zealous support. "But will this cause prevail?" Undoubtedly, as long as charity survives.

There are very many Catholics who have kept aloof from this growing mission movement. These especially, I think, I should ask to stand in spirit beside the graves which cover the spacious fields of the missions. In the past, perhaps, they have been somewhat mystified as to the lesson to be drawn from these graves.

An earnest charity, which is quick to recognize and sympathize with the crying needs at home, often bestows so little thought to the missionary graves abroad that it does not catch their whispered message. Otherwise, a truly charitable heart could not pass by without one thought of compassion—even a short Our Father—for the neediest of all our brethren, the poor pagans overwhelmed in spiritual misery.

Could I not conduct these and all others who love the Church as their mother to the graves of the missionaries? If they will rest their gaze upon these graves for a moment, the memorial crosses will bring them a message more intimate than any written appeal from the mission, more

convincing than any record of proud successes. These homely crosses will tell of the sacred blessings which, issuing from the numerous sources of the mission movement at home, unite and gather strength as they flow through the arid and lonesome missionary fields, and then, turned in their course by these little crosses, flow homewards in a mighty stream. Only those who contemplate these crosses can appreciate the blessings that flow from them. Those who take an active interest in the promotion of the missions conduct back to their native land the flood of blessings which but for their co-operation might be dried up as it crosses the barren and thirsty sands.

Our age needs ideals to save it from being submerged in rank materialism. It has the courage of achievement, but too often lacks the spirit which lends work a higher value in the eyes of God. The worker tends to his machine as long as the wonderful machinery in his own body continues to function. The machine then hastens on, tended by the successors of the old workman. Many a scholar refuses to lay aside his pen until death snatches it from his fingers. Possibly it was a noble work on which he was engaged—a work which incites others to take up his pen and finish it. With deliberate step, the farmer walks behind his plough, and breaks up the clods, but oftentimes it is his children who gather the harvest into the barns. A widow toils until her fingers bleed and her heart fails so as to support and

educate her child. May God grant that all these have also labored for heaven, and that they have impressed on all their labors and strivings the stamp of eternal value!

When, however, this restless struggle continues day after day, the clearness of the eternal hills may be at times obscured by the dark clouds of worldly sense and material cares, and the image of God within the soul may grow dim. The plain and lonely grave of the missionary, which marks the end of a life spent solely for God, then teaches us to direct our gaze upwards once more, and to regain our nobler conceptions of life. A life which has been consumed in God's service will teach us to seek God in the midst of whirring machines, and, while struggling for earthly possessions and the recognition of men, not to lose sight of the honor of God.

The rush and struggle of life is apt to interfere with our prayers. Yet, without prayer and the proper elevation of our souls to God, all our ideals must decay.

Over the grave of the missionary stands Our Savior. With outstretched arms and with His whole attitude inspired by divine love, He longs to deliver a funeral oration—not for the deceased, whom He is already rewarding for his life of sacrifice, but for those who stand around. And what does He choose as His text? Standing on the funeral mound, He looks around and, as formerly at Jacob's Well, sees the fields ripening for

the harvest—a harvest of peoples who are ready to enter the Church. Turning to His disciples (and do not we also want to belong to their number?) He says: “Pray to the Lord of the harvest that He may send laborers.”

If the misery of the pagan world teaches us to pray, certainly the misery of those around us will not leave us unmoved, and, when misfortune assails us, we shall all the more readily fold our hands in prayer and confide our trials to God. Those who pray most zealously for the propagation of the Faith in distant lands are likewise those who pray most zealously for its preservation at home.

Very closely associated with fidelity to the Faith are the highest ideals of peoples. There is scarcely anything in the world which reveals the precious treasure of our holy Faith in so glorious a light and with such attractive beauty as the great sacrifices of the missionaries to relieve the spiritual and moral misery of the pagans and to bring them the blessings of the Cross. Every mission grave is a focus in which all the sufferings and privations of mission life are assembled, a focus in which are united all the burning rays of a love that will continue to glow before the throne of Eternal Love, still inflamed by the ardent supplication for the people by which it was consumed on earth.

One of the chief vices of our age is the spirit of selfishness, which tends to chill the ardor of

charity. This spirit often excuses itself from supporting the missions, by citing the needs of the homeland. Will national needs be disregarded or misunderstood by those whose hearts are inflamed with love for the pagan missions? I scarcely think so. I cannot imagine how a hand that is open for misery abroad can remain closed when confronted with misery at home. A narrow charity tends to withdraw more and more into itself, and to become finally congealed into hard selfishness. The more expansive our charity becomes, the more certainly will every misfortune and misery find a sympathetic spot in our hearts.

Martyrs of love lie in the mission graves, whose epitaph has been written by Our Savior Himself: "Greater love than this no man hath than that a man lay down his life for his friends." How often might we read this inscription if we would but open our eyes!

The cemetery of the missionaries of the Paris Seminary at Hongkong made an especially deep impression on me. There in an evergreen valley, swept by refreshing sea-breezes, the Congregation has established a Convalescent Home for its invalid priests from China, Siam, Japan, and Corea. In this quiet and idyllic spot hundreds of its missionaries have recovered their lost strength for a final struggle before they lie down for their last rest at their beloved mission station. Others, however, have waited vainly for the return of their strength. Many a longing glance was sent

out across the broad ocean away beyond the gently murmuring palms which whisper plans of the future into listening ears. Many a missionary counted the days which must elapse before he hoped to greet the ship that would cut through the waves below and bear him back to his beloved ones on the mission. Over their hopes and longings now stands a modest cross of white stone, bearing the names of the zealous missionaries. Below in a quiet spot, over which dark-green shadows fall, lie the bodies of those who sank down here for their everlasting rest. Over this cemetery an air of peaceful resignation rules. "Fiat voluntas Dei" (God's will be done), must have been the last sigh of all who rest here, however their love may have regretted the interruption of their holy labor. Higher up stands a large cross of white stone, guarding the graves of two other bearers of the cross. Under the shadow of this cross slumber two missionary bishops and at their feet about fifty missionaries. Stricken to death, they dragged themselves to this spot, and in this quiet cemetery, under the shelter of the Cross, their self-denying and loving labors ended. They have not, however, taken all their love with them to the grave. They have left us their love as a precious heritage, and our appreciation of this treasure will be shown by our whole-hearted love of the missions.

Over our graves also will one day be erected the symbol of our faith, our love, and our hope,

whether this symbol be fashioned of rich marble or of homely wood. A plain tablet of gilt letters engraved on the stone will tell our names to the passer-by. Some will hurry past, but now and then a few will pause. What will these think, and what will they say?

What the people may say, need not concern us much, even if our love for the Church awakens no sympathetic echo in their hearts, and even if they should shrug their shoulders at our fidelity to Christ.

What will Our Savior say, whose symbol surmounts our grave? For myself, I wish for nothing more than the assurance of a reward for whatever I may have done for the conversion of heathen: "*Animam salvasti; tuam prædestinasti*"—"Thou hast saved a soul, and thereby predestined thine own soul for eternal salvation."

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